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Divine Decree, and Free Will.



DIVINE DECREE, AND FREE WILL;

BEING AN INTERPRETATION OF

THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

SHOWING FROM THE XIII. 18, V. 1, VIII. 2, XV. 1, AND
FROM ALL THE SEVENS OF THE PROPHECY,—THAT SEVEN
PERIODS OF 666 YEARS ARE REVEALED.

AND ALSO NEW MATTER ON THE

Being of the Apocalypse,—The Alpha and Omega.

AND WITH LINES ON THE QUESTION,

DOES GOD PUNISH SIN?

By the Author of

"THE SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL HISTORY
OF OUR FALLEN AND REDEEMED WORLD; OR, THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST,
WHICH GOD GAVE UNTO HIM."

ALSO, OF

WORKS UPON THE BOOKS OF GENESIS, JOB, THE PROPHETS, TRACTS, &c.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON: WILLIAM HUNT AND COMPANY,
12, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1878.



101. f. 612.

I KNOW, THAT EVEN NOW, WHATSOEVER THOU WILT ASK OF GOD,
GOD WILL GIVE IT THEE." (JOHN xi. 22.)

"HE WHICH TESTIFIETH THESE THINGS SAITH, SURELY I COME
QUICKLY. AMEN. EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS." (REV. xxii. 20.)

"THOU SHALT CALL THY WALLS SALVATION, AND THY GATES PRAISE."
(ISAIAH lx. 18.)



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

ON THE BEING OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION.

My object in this preface is to set forth, to exhibit the Being who gave this Book of the Revelation to the world; not a portrait of Him, but the living Being Himself, before my reader. It is most important rightly to comprehend Him, His Divine nature, and His grace; Him as revealed to us by all the titles given to Him in this last book of Holy Scripture. The prophecy opens with this announcement: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him,"—the Saviour of the world, the called and anointed One who had trod this earth, who had lived upon it. How did God give this Revelation to the human Agent? By Himself in Him: He so entirely dwelt and reigned in Him, that the revelation was made by God through Jesus Christ, just as He had before worked in Him for the redemption of the world. The Being who stands before us in this book is a complex Being,—Three in One, and One in Three; and this is what I want my reader to see. The benediction of grace and peace bestowed upon the seven Churches is from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful

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witness, the first begotten of the dead. And "unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood," is the ascription of glory and dominion for ever and ever. And immediately the complex Being,—Three in One, and the One Being, the One in Three before revealed,—stands before us: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (Rev. i. 8.) It will be seen this was what was said of God in the fourth verse: so it was the One eternal God, the Almighty, who was in this Alpha and Omega. See Him as still revealed in this first chapter: "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." (Ver. 11.) And it is still the same Being who is seen in the seven candlesticks: "One like unto the Son of man,"—in His sacerdotal robes of our now High Priest before the throne; "After the power of an endless life" (Heb. vii.), and clothed also in all the panoply of power and sovereignty of the Godhead. In His hand is the "sharp two-edged sword," His own word, by which He reigns and rules; and the "seven stars," or "the angels of the seven Churches," the representatives of the seven dispensations, as Seth, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel" (Gen. iv. 25); and Abraham of the house of Israel, or of the second dispensation; and Peter, the man of faith, the Representative of the third dispensation, or Christian Church. It is not now my object to direct the mind of my reader to any of these; but to the One Object in whose hand all is, under whose reign and rule all are. Hear this, His third proclamation of Himself, in this first chapter. When John had seen Him in His majesty, and power, and glory, he fell at His feet as dead, and then the voice was heard, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Oh, that I could inspire in my reader the same awe there was in John when he beheld this august Being! Without

it we cannot duly estimate the value of the prophecy to ourselves, or rightly reflect upon the solemnity of the long page of history revealed. Without grasping a true knowledge of the Being, we cannot give the importance due to what He said, understand the authority by which He spake, the right and wisdom by which He decreed, nor the power by which He executes. Whereas we are bound to receive what is written in this book as from God ; like every other part of Holy Scripture, eternal truth, and as established for ever. And in order to this, we must see in the One Being, ordaining and interpreting all, "The Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," as He was revealed by Isaiah. (Isa. ix. 6 ; vii. 14.) "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As He was revealed by all the prophets. (Dan. vii. 9—22.) By the whole of ancient Scripture. The Father was in the Son ; One God. (John xiv. 9.) And the Holy Ghost was in Him ; One God. God was the Father, God was the Son, and God was the Holy Ghost. So the Father was God, the Son was God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And relatively to ourselves, the Fatherhood of God was in Christ, the Holy Ghost was in Christ, and the Godhead was in Christ. And this is what I want my reader to understand, that the risen and glorified Christ, the Being of this book, who descended into Patmos, is the Author, Source, Fountain of all power, strength, light, and life to ourselves. Not in the way of the procession of the Spirit, as that term is generally employed ; but when the work of redemption was completed, the world saved, the Saviour and Redeemer by virtue of His life and death became the Author and Fountain of life to the world, the Spiritual Head of the Church. The Holy Ghost was henceforth in His gift, as the perfect Man who had never forfeited the Spirit of the Father ; and the perfect God, who could not forfeit His nature, or deny Himself. His own Spirit was the Spirit of God, and He became the giver of the Almighty

gift to whom He would. I repeat, the giver of His own eternal Spirit, who was, and is the eternal Spirit of God, One eternal Spirit, One Almighty, One God; although, as the divinely appointed Restorer of all things, the Holy Ghost was to act in a distinct office, and to be the Third Person in the Holy Trinity. This one point I wish to establish in my readers' mind: that Christ, who was the Almighty God, is the Medium of the gift of the Spirit, having obtained it by His own blood, and resurrection from the dead; and we must look to Him for it (John xvi. 7; Luke xxiv. 49; Acts ii. 33), even to the Alpha and Omega of this book, as I shall show later. As the Redeemer of the world proceeded and came forth from God the Creator of the world when His work of creation was done (Ps. ii. 7; John vi. 42), so God the Holy Ghost proceeded and came forth from the Creator and Redeemer when their works were done, to act in His distinct office of life and restoration of the world, that had been created and redeemed,—not as an effluence alone, but as One Almighty, One God; distinct, yet a complex Being, sent to finish the work of God. (John xvi. 7.) And yet in all the works of God the Three Holy Persons act in One, and the One in Three.

It was the voice of this Being, the Alpha and the Omega, we heard in Rev. i. 18: "and have the keys of hell and of death." What did He mean? Keys were the known symbols of government and power (Isa. xxii. 22); and so here the meaning of the glorified Head of the Church, of the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, was, that He had not only rule over "heaven and earth," as He had said after His resurrection (Matt. xxviii. 18), but also over all the powers of darkness,—over hell and death, over the nature of evil, that which is ever leading on to death and hell; that which He had manifested in His life by all His miracles,—at the grave of Lazarus, at the bier of the son of the widow of Nain, at the couch of the daughter of Jairus; and as when He said, "Come out of the

man, thou unclean spirit." The God in Christ ever possessed that power (1 Kings xxii. 22), but in the flesh it was manifested to His creatures, to the world. (Eph. iii. 9 ; Col. i. 26.) We may believe that the evil nature was coeval with God, and that the great and good and almighty Spirit devised means by Three Divine Persons to destroy it, totally to blot it out of existence ; and this, we may believe, will be done in the cycles of futurity. (Heb. ii. 14 ; 1 John iii. 8 ; Eph. i. 10 ; 1 Tim. ii. 4, 5, 6.)

But these two powers in Rev. i. 18 are also spoken of as two beings : " His name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him." (Rev. vi. 8.) And again in Rev. xx. 14, " Death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." In Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3, 7, we see the Almighty Being who has all this power and dominion in His own hand. They are as is revealed, or as the Alpha and Omega, the risen Head of the Church, of all government, declared,— " The keys of hell and of death in His own hand." He will be the Judge of the world (Matt. xxv. 31, 32), and the Executor of the sentence of judgment ; the Executor also of the sentence upon the just ; the Giver of eternal life, as we see in all these revelations of the great judgment day. Then let us know, and love, and worship, and serve Him now, that we may be found of Him in peace then. This is the Being I am trying to set before my readers, " The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." " Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. i. 5, 6.)

But now I want my reader to see the seven attitudes in which He presents Himself to the seven Churches of the world's history. And I would have him note that they are rooted in Rev. i. 13—16 ; that the same Almighty Being, who is first proclaimed, may be seen throughout the marvellous prophecy, a complex Being.

To the first Church. "These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." (Rev. ii. 1 ; i. 13, 16.) Do we believe in Him as occupying this almighty position towards the seven Churches of the world's history? I do not believe there is one in a thousand who thinks upon the matter at all ; still here He stands, God, the same from eternity to eternity. And it is in consequence of this apathy and unbelief that He from time to time comes forth to awaken the world, and to keep up the knowledge of Himself. The stars are seen to fall, and the candlesticks to be removed. "Behold He cometh with clouds, and *every eye shall see Him.*"

To the second Church. "These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." (Rev. ii. 8 ; i. 17, 18.) One eternal God ; but in the crucified, risen, and glorified Christ. Or, as St. Paul gave the interpretation, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

To the third Church. "These things saith He that hath the sharp sword with two edges." (Rev. ii. 12 ; i. 16.) This sharp sword with two edges is the Word of God, the Old Testament and the New, "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." (Eph. vi. 17 ; Heb. iv. 12.) Thus is the Word of God made to us a living reality : written by God, authorized, and for ever and for ever confirmed by Him : "The Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

To the fourth Church. "These things saith the Son of God, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass." (Rev. ii. 18 ; i. 14, 15.) I am sure we little consider the truth of these positive assertions ; and yet it is declared to us throughout Scripture, as here, that the eyes of God are as a flame of fire : "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." (Prov. xv. 3 ; 2 Chron. xvi. 9.) And also that He knoweth every thought afar off. Let us believe in the reality of this Being always about our

path, realize at all times His presence, and it will be a safeguard against sin.

To the fifth Church. "These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars." (Rev. iii. 1 ; i. 4, 16.) This voice, or proclamation, is one of the most important to the Churches, if one can be said to be more so than another. The life of God relatively to the Church is in His own keeping ; without which life she can do nothing. The seven Spirits in the seven stars, angels, or representatives of the seven Churches, are the keys of the kingdom of God ; the gifts of God that come directly from Him. The 1 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 28 can never be read too often. Our glorified Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the spiritual Head of the Church, says here, "He has all these keys, or gifts in their corporate form, and He can give them to whom He will, and take them away when He will." (Gen. vi. 3 ; Hag. ii. 5 ; Rev. iv. 5 ; v. 6.) This is the foundation of the Christian Church, of the Gospel, of the system of Christian ethics : "Thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with gifts." (Ps. lxxviii. 18.) "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts." (Zech. iv. 6 ; ii. 10.) "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion : for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." (Isa. xii. 6, 2.) "God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles ; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. i. 27.) But the responsibility of being the object or subject of these gifts, of being the seat of God's government, the throne of His presence, the depository of eternal truth, is enormous : a truly reflective mind can never contemplate the fact but with awe. And there is not only the neglect of the great commission, and the charge, but there is also the abuse of the privileges, position, and high honour conferred. With the holy endowment, how do we swerve to the world, and dishonour God !

This is what I want to teach, as I trace and set forth this August Being throughout this book : "The first and the last." "He that was dead, and is alive for evermore." Yes, this "Alpha and Omega," this "Christ of God," is God, the Almighty, "the One supreme eternal Being ;" and His voice is, "These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars." That is, He is the Foundation of spiritual life. (Zech. iv. 2.) "After the power of an endless life." (Heb. vii.) The Leader, and the Giver of the Holy Ghost, who is again "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit of Christ : " One eternal Spirit, One Almighty, One God. The regenerating, sanctifying power ; the Restorer of all things, One God. Then let us most solemnly contemplate, and reflect upon this Being of the Revelation, in His majesty, and honour, and glory, and power. (Rev. v. 13.) Let us worship and believe Him, for He is the Almighty God.

To the *sixth* Church. "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth ; I know thy works : behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it : for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my Word, and hast not denied my name." (Rev. iii. 7, 8.) To understand the voice to this *sixth* Church,—and we should understand it, for it is a most important one to ourselves,—we should picture this triune Being I am trying to set forth, this risen and glorified Christ, standing in Patmos in the year ninety-four of the Christian era, an omniscient Being, scanning the eighteen centuries that then lay in the future, mapping out the chart of time, of the life of each individual, as is now fulfilled. Can I set a more wonderful portrait before my reader than this of "the living God"? What a deep mystery lies before us ! Who can fathom the mystery of that Being ? "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." We must think of the evil spirit as coeval with God ; and that God, in the profound mystery of His love,

undertook to redeem nature from its native state, and to restore it to holiness, and to eternal union with Himself. I see nothing short of this in the rolling ages of the past and the future. But let us analyze the sentences of this voice to this *sixth* Church.

"These things *saith He that is holy*:" that is, the Holy One of the human race, and the Holy One of the Divine nature, who never forfeited His inherent inheritance of innocence, holiness, and perfection, His perfect manhood and almighty Godhead. (Ps. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 27; xiii. 35—37; Luke i. 35; John x. 18.) He was an Incorruptibility. The law of life was one of the attributes of His Being, and therefore He could not see corruption: His nature was resistive of it. He was "the life;" the first great cause of existence, the Lord over it; "the Lord of life," "the Prince of life." He retained life in His own right, and was therefore the Author of it to others. And thus it is we see Him in this book THE LORD JEHOVAH, GOD from eternity to eternity. "He whom God raised again saw no corruption:" "*He that is true*:" that is, the veritable Being of the covenant who was to come. Veritably the True, as in Revelation xix. 11. The true Light, the true Witness, "the true God," who was to come, and who is come. (2 Chron. xv. 3; Jer. x. 10; John xvii. 3; 1 Epis. v. 20.) Christ had been so truly, "the True," that He was "the Truth,"—the embodiment of eternal truth, the manifestation of all that had been written concerning Him (Luke xxiv. 26, 27, 44, 45, 46; John i. 1—17) of the Father and the God. We see God revealed in Him; but the finite mind can never grasp or fathom the eternal truth of Christ, the love of God in Him,—when or where they began. I will not add when or where they will end; for they can never end: they will endure for ever. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Reader, pause to consider what came by Jesus Christ: the

whole volume of the grace of God towards the evil spirit, whether speaking of it collectively as a personality, or as in individuals. The grace of God came to destroy that evil one, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness. And every gift, favour, and blessing, temporal and spiritual,—every hope of heaven and of eternal life we have, came by Jesus Christ. “The world was made by Him, and by Him all things consist.” What a revelation! “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” Let us be very humble, obedient learners at His feet, praying Him that He will more and more reveal to us that profound depth of truth concerning Himself which He came from heaven to bring. It is an anchor for the soul in life, upon which we can breast the billow and the storm: it is a foundation in death, upon which we may die at rest.

“He that hath the key of David.” This is the one point I want my readers to see. We have seen that a key was the known symbol of power. Here it is a symbol of spiritual power, of all power, as I shall show later. “Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.” (Luke xi. 52.) Just as a key unlocks a door so that we have then the power to set the door wide open, so the key of spiritual power unlocks the door of eternal truth, which I have shown is Christ; and we have then power to enter the kingdom of God by Him.

The pilgrim said, “I have a key in my bosom that will open every door in Doubting Castle.” Oh, blessed key! What is it? The gift Christ has to give, His own holy, almighty Spirit. Nothing can withstand Him. Let us see that we have it; and ever go forward with the glorious banner, with the keys, not of St. Peter, but of the kingdom of God floating upon the mighty ensign. Let my reader trace for himself the meaning of keys throughout Scripture, not only of spiritual gifts and power, but of government temporal and spiritual. (Is. xxii. 22; ix. 6, 7;

Matt. xvi. 19 ; Rev. i. 18 ; ix. 1 ; xx. 1.) And hence the further notification added in this verse : "*He that openeth, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth.*"

When Christ gives the Holy Ghost to a man, a door is opened to him, and no man can shut it. But this key of David, in His own hand, is more than this : it is the power to raise the dead—the world—from the death of sin, or whatsoever else He will. And I must therefore here refer to what I have said before in my preface to my last work, "Truth and Work : " that this verse brings us to the *sixth* period of 666 years, dating from the time of the calling of Abraham, here the *sixth* Church. But it is the same page of history as is revealed under the *sixth* seal (Rev. vi. 12) ; the *sixth* trumpet (Rev. ix., from verse 13) ; and under the *sixth* vial (Rev. xvi. 12—16.) Then what does this announcement in this verse particularly refer to : "*He that hath the key of David*" ? Reader, read with reverence and awe,—with the most profound awe,—for it is nothing less than the key of the ancient house of Israel ; the key of the throne of David ; the key of holy office ; the key that was taken from the Jewish Church (Matt. xxi. 43), and given to the Christian Church (Rev. xvi. 19) ; the key of the Spirit of God,—the gift of the Holy Ghost,—that can to-day raise the Jewish Church from her state of spiritual death, gather her from her dispersed and scattered condition, and bring her again into the land of Canaan, into the fold of the Christian Church, a living and a glorious Church. This is precisely what we see under the *sixth* seal. (Rev. vi. 12 ; vii. ; viii. 1.) And hence as I have said, this notification to the *sixth* Church : "*These things saith He that hath the key of David.*" Let Rev. vii. be read here, and 144,000 of the House of Israel will be seen to rise from the dead,—perhaps representing the whole body as seen in Ezek. xxxvii ; for there is here a great multitude that no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, as foretold by St. Paul. "If the casting away of

them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead." (Rom. ix. ; xi.) From the ninth verse of Revelation vii. is one of the most thrilling visions of Revelation. Let it be read here: it does not want one word to enhance the epic story, the touching glory. I repeat, let us gaze at Him who liveth and was dead, as He spanned the eighteen centuries that lay before Him, and drew this vision of the resurrection of the House of Israel: "These are the true sayings of God." (Rev. xix. 9, 10.)

But let us note here that the monarchy of David was a spiritual reign, as the ruling power of Israel was a spiritual rule: all alike divinely intended to reveal the spiritual reign of Christ. (Matt. xxii. 42—45.) "I am the root, and the offspring of David." And hence His reappearing at this time to the ancient house, to this *sixth* Church, with the proclamation that He has the spiritual key of His own throne and kingdom to restore them now, or rather to restore Israel to them. "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i. 33.) "David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one Shepherd." (Ez. xxxvii. 24, 25.)

"He that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth." When the Alpha and Omega stood and proclaimed this, the door of the Jewish economy was shut, the door of divine office shut; the holy city was a ruin (Rev. xi. 2); the Spirit of God He had in His hand (Rev. iii. 1) He has taken away, and the star held therein fell. But He never shuts one door but He opens another to the little handful of His people. "At this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Rom. xi. 5.) He opened another door to the whole Gentile world, and His voice to that little Zoar was most energizing and inspiring: "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut

it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Let this inspiring voice to this past epoch be an example to my people; as the little Church went forth to become what she now is, so let the large body of true believers now go forth to embrace the world. It is not uniformity that we want; but unity of spirit, of purpose, and of principle.

Let us remember that He that liveth and was dead saw across these nineteen centuries, and saw what the Church now is; and He is now looking forward, it may be eighty centuries more, and sees her as she will be at the end of them. Each being in that ocean of time will represent his own individuality, and retain it through eternity; but each individual life will tell upon the whole, leave its footprint, extend its circle, and never be lost in the sum of existence.

Let us remember what Great Britain was when He stood and said, "Behold, I set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it,"—inhabited by barbarians in Pagan darkness, savages inured to blood; but the door was open, the door of the world was open, and no man has shut it. When we think of the last three or four hundred years, what is it culminating to? Coal, steam, electricity,—the world brought together; the printing press,—a free press. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows?" Yes, the God of Isaiah, and of Daniel, saw that network of railways that now covers the earth, and He delighted in the means or progress He beheld. Of what is in the womb of the future we have no conception, but He sees all from the beginning to the end of time. "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it," is ever issuing from His lips; and so now, whatever may happen for chastening, to awaken, the Christian Church may go forward and take the world. Let us remember we have the standard of the cross, of eternal truth, of Christ. Let

us not suffer it to be taken ; let us not compromise, cede one inch of ground to our enemies, nor turn our backs upon them ; but be valiant for the truth, supplicating Him who hath the key of David, to give the power ; and the world will be struck with the enthusiasm, and will believe.

When this almighty omniscient Being of the apocalypse said to John, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev. x. 11), He did not mean that John in person would be called upon to do it, but that his Word would be proclaimed by the same one eternal Spirit by whom the book was given ; as when Christ said of John the Baptist, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." (Matt. xi. 14, 15 ; xvii. 10—13.) And the prophecy, as sweet as honey in the mouth of John, was this first interpretation of seven periods of 666 years. And the bitterness, as soon as he had eaten it,—digested the matter,—was the interpretation of the longer period.

Sir J. Herschel said, "that number, weight, and measure, are the foundations of all exact science." Thus do we see not only the exact, but the Divine science of this prophecy. It is constructed under the rule of *seven*, and of 666. It is by these numbers I have brought it to this mathematical demonstration. Revelation is under the rule of seven. As I have said, the architect who built the universe, who constructed that marvellous book of science that Herschel read, studied, and loved, constructed also the book of "the Revelation," of Revelation : "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" (Isa. xl. 12.) And then the prophet exclaimed, Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, and who had been His counsellor? Who had taught Him, and instructed Him ; given Him knowledge and understanding? And then went on to reveal further the Almighty

Being, and to reflect upon His power. St. Paul, in writing upon the great changes of time, and God's dealings with men, quotes the prophet's words. (Rom. xi. 33, 34.) So we find God measuring time. (Hab. iii. 6; Rev. xi. 1, 2; xxi. 15, 16, 17; Zech. ii. 2.) It is the omniscient God who is doing this; and it is that marvellous attribute of omniscience that justifies Him in all His dealings with men, and explains the wonderful chart of His operations that lies before us; every being in that chart known from a past eternity. (Rev. xiii. 8; Rom. viii. 29, 30.) God is working by His instrument the creature, by His agent the Church; but they must work by His Spirit.

If Christ had proclaimed Himself to be the greatest mathematician the world had ever seen, how would it have scorned the man, and have ridiculed Him as mad! And yet He was the greatest mathematician it has seen before or since: "The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." The universe was made by Him, by number, weight, and measure. Yes: by this Being of the Apocalypse, by God in Him that liveth and was dead; by Him who measured time (Rev. xi. 1, 2), who gave this Revelation of time to the world, by the number of seven, and of "six hundred, threescore and six;" by Him who said, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things." Yes: there will be things in heaven we have no conception of: beautiful music, beautiful poetry, marvellous sciences, and number, weight, and measure, the foundation of all. These, in sacred things, are brought to earth just in proportion as we believe in God in Christ in relation to ourselves. Of what is in the womb of the future, we can have no conception. But it is this Creator, Redeemer, and Restorer of the Apocalypse, I want my reader to behold. Time is measured to the end, to the moment of which it is written, "There should be time no longer."

"Behold, *I have* set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." When this was proclaimed, the Holy Ghost had

been given, whom none can resist, against whom no man can shut the open door. When this is done it will be Christ's own doing: "And shutteth, and no man openeth." When He takes away His own Spirit, the door is shut; while He is in us, the door is still open. Every work that is not done by the Spirit is not lasting; there may be surface work, natural benevolence, philanthropy, organizations, governments, laws, reform, securing order; but without the radical change,—the Holy Ghost made the Foundation and Ground-work of the operations,—the work of God cannot be done, His kingdom cannot come. It is this spiritual travail He demands of us, this kingdom within a kingdom He commands of us to strengthen, and to confirm unto the end. This is why His kingdom must be a suffering one in this world, because it is in the opposition of the world, of the kingdom of darkness; but throughout life's short day we must maintain the conflict.

But now what I want my reader to see is, that all this spiritual almighty power is in the hand and in the gift of the Alpha and Omega,—The Almighty of this book. Not only is the Fatherhood of God relatively to ourselves in Him (John xx. 17); not only is the Godhead relatively to ourselves in Him (Col. ii. 9); but the Holy Ghost also relatively to ourselves, in His Divine power and Godhead; in His distinct office as the Restorer of all things is in Him that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore. (Rev. iii. 1.) The voice in Rev. xxi. 1, 5, 6, "Behold, I make all things new. . . . It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end," is the voice of the Holy Ghost; but it is the Spirit of Christ, "The Spirit of God," of the Alpha and Omega,—One eternal Spirit, One Almighty, One God; the revelation of whom is so wonderfully made in John xiv. 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 26. Here are seen the Three in One; but in Zech. iv. 2, 6, 12, 14, we see the One in Three. The Godhead One, the glory equal, and the Majesty co-eternal.

And so I am sure now if it were the purpose of the great

Head of the Church, of Him who "Hath the key of David," to raise the house of Israel from their death of the sin of unbelief to day, He could do it, as foreshown in Rev. vii., and in Eze. xxxvii. This would be simply the giving of His Holy Spirit as promised: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." (Joel ii. 28; Zech. vi. 12, 13; Jer. xxxi. 31, 34.) This would be no miracle of power, but only a larger manifestation of God to His people. Let us worship God in this Almighty Being, invoke His help, pray for this gift of the Holy Ghost, of which He is the source; and we shall see life from the dead, some manifestation of His grace and power, some revelation that He only can make. "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." I repeat, God never shuts one door against His people, but He opens to them another of a still larger sphere of usefulness; if instead of being discouraged, they rise above the earthly thrall, the world, when it shall fall, and go in humbly, but boldly, and take possession of the field of labour. "Behold I have set before *thee* an open door, and no man can shut it," is ever added. This was said alike to the Christian Church in the beginning of this third dispensation, and to her at the beginning of this *sixth* period of 666 years,—dating from the calling of Abraham, at the time of our glorious Reformation. "I will give him the morning star. I am the bright and Morning Star." Then let us still look a little further for that spiritual power that is to regenerate, sanctify, and to restore all things.

In the work and life of Christ upon earth there was this spiritual *power*. The four Gospels are a revelation of it. His miracles, *power* over all evil, His wisdom and teaching,—all proclaimed it: "Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath *power* on earth to forgive sins (then saith He to the sick of the palsy), Arise, take up thy bed, and go

unto thine house." (Matt. ix. 2, 5, 6.) And He taught us to say to the Father, "Lead us not into temptation," not judicially, "but deliver us from evil: *for* Thine is the kingdom, and the *power*, and the glory, for ever. Amen." (Rev. vi. 13) Here is a revelation and confession of the attribute of Omnipotence,—that God can suffer or avert evil as He will: just that which we see ceded to Him "that liveth, and was dead." This is now what I wish to do: set forth Him, God in Him, almighty.

After His resurrection we hear Him say, "All *power* is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." What power is this? The power of His invisible kingdom: just that which He had taught us to ascribe to the Father: "Thine is the kingdom, the *power*, and the glory." God was, in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself: He is in Him still, and by His Holy Spirit reconciling the world unto Himself. "All *power* is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, *therefore*, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity are revealed as taking part in the great work of regeneration, sanctification, and the restoration of all things: just as we see them in this one Being of the Apocalypse,—one God. And we must go to Him, the Fountain and Author of life, for *power* for all work (John iv. 10—26): "Lo, I am with you alway unto the end of the world." And this is what we see in this *historical* vision: God, in the glorified sacrifice for sin, ever with His people.

The Alpha and Omega is a complex Being: and it matters not whether we speak of the Father, or of the Holy Ghost in Him, the Godhead is intended. The office of the Third Person in the Holy Trinity is distinct in the work of universal recovery; and we must believe in Him, supplicate God earnestly for the gift, as nothing truly worthy can be done without His *power*. Still we do see the Three Persons co-operating in all the works of God: three, but one God.

"As many as received Him" (Christ) "to them gave He *power* to become the sons of God:" that is, gave His own Holy Spirit, restored the link lost at the Fall (1 John iii. 2), the relationship of children of the eternal Father. This is the sequence of the work of Christ, and without the twofold operation we are not saved. Thus St. Paul wrote, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the *exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe according to the working of His mighty power.*" (Eph. i. 18, 19.)

And thus it was the same Apostle could exclaim, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the *power of God* unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. i. 16.) And St. Luke says, "The *power* of the Lord was present to heal them" (Luke v. 17): that is, the power of the Holy Ghost working with Christ. "The Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three lords, but one Lord."

The Gospel is the only foundation of true ethics: it provides the *power*, or life for work, and for holy living; the gift of the Spirit is the essential of the Christian life. No effort, no resolve, no strength, can avail anything without it: the world can never be reclaimed and made holy by any other means. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." (John vi. 28, 29.) And when we believe, He gives us His Spirit to do His will and His work. Faith is first a gift of grace, but it remains with ourselves to cultivate or neglect the gift. (1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.) No natural gifts without spiritual *power* can accomplish the work of God; no natural kindness or benevolence; "the Spirit of Christ" alone can really do His work. The work of the Spirit alone is the manifestation of God, work that none but the Spirit can do. We must abide in the calling wherein we are called; know what our ground, our talent, our gift is, and not run into devious

paths where God has not called us. If the eye of faith, of the Spirit, and the heart, be kept steadily upon the Holy and the True, who "hath the key of David," supplicating Him for help so to dwell and reign in us that we cannot fail of His will, we shall not greatly err, although our work may still be imperfect. "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."

I have thus gone into this subject here because of the two interpretations I have given of this Book of the Revelation: a period of seven periods of 666 years from the time of the calling of Abraham, or a period of seven dispensations of 2,000 years; three periods of 666 years in each 1,000 years, save the fractional two. Can the world now be won in the first given period? In the remaining 788 years? I believe it may; but only by a great commission of the Gospel being sent all over the world under the great spiritual Head of the Church,—of Him who is now proclaiming, "These things saith He that hath the key of David." He has here revealed that He can send forth an angel,—or in human parlance an agent,—with the seal, or gift of His own Spirit, to raise the house of Israel at once, in one day, and this in this *sixth* period. Can He not, then, by some agency gifted with the same Almighty power, raise the whole world from the death of sin, and bring in the millennium? I am sure He can; but without faith in Him, without the spiritual prowess, all human organization, all wealth and means brought to bear, can only be chaff, hay, stubble. The Christian Church is now the agent charged with this great commission: she is upon the border of the promised land, the heavenly Canaan. The *seventh* period of 666 years is before her: will she rise up at the call? "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." (Rev. xiv. 6.) I repeat, will the Christian Church, the universal body of the Church of Christ,

Churchmen and Dissenters all over the world, in spiritual union and in purpose one, now be this seventh angel agent, and do the work of God in Christ; or will they spend the time in search of preferments, place, and power, in jealousies, envyings, and strife, and let the golden opportunity be lost? Let Rev. vii. be read here, to see what lies before her, if she will rise to the call, go forth undauntedly, and proclaim the truth of Christ. We have His standard, His commission, His promises, His Spirit, Himself. Oh, let us not surrender! It was said by a Moslem, "Four things come not back: the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life, and the neglected opportunity." Let the weighty truths be now digested by the Christian.

We cannot disguise the fact that there are the seven thunders of the 10th chapter that announce a prolonged period, and we must listen to them. Should it be brought about, still let the Christian Church be faithful and firm, God will overrule it for good and His own glory. A day of grace may be given to the evil spirit, of which the finite mind can have no conception. Let not the Church be discouraged; but rise with the occasion, and labour faithfully until the end come.

The last attitude in which the Almighty presents Himself to the Churches is, "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. iii. 14.) In His life, and by His death, He was "the faithful and true Witness." (1 Tim. vi. 13; Rev. i. 5.) He could not deny Himself. And so now He is the faithful Witness in the seven Churches: He ever knows what is enacted there; He presides over every community and assembly to defend and protect all: "The faithful and true Witness." We may most confidently commit our cause to Him.

And "the beginning of the creation of God:" how does this take us back into the depths of a past eternity, we know not where! All Scripture confirms the same. (1 Col. i. 16, 17;

Heb. i. 2, 8, 10.) I have often said redemption was the foundation of creation: creation was the medium for the work of redemption. There was an evil spirit to destroy: one so subtle and mighty, that there was but one Being more almighty,—God; and He undertook, in three holy Persons, to destroy that evil nature called the devil, although before its final destruction it must be universally revealed. Oh, let us work with God in this subjugation of this malign power! His own Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, is the Witness upon earth of what all are doing for or against it. (1 John v. 6, 8, 10.) Our gifts are so infinite and various, that, while true and faithful, we must be charitable. 1 Cor. xii. and xiii. can never be read too often. “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.”

Such is this Being of the Apocalypse: “The first and the last which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. He that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore.

In Rev. iv. we see Him in heaven, upon the throne of glory. But what He is there, He is in this world, to all His people,—a covenant-keeping God: in His duplex nature, the Mediator between God and man. And hence this beautiful symbol of covenant grace that is seen to gird His throne, in sight like unto an emerald. Throughout the world’s long history He is the same: He is presiding and reigning for His people’s good. And hence this ascription of praise to Him: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.”

In Rev. v. we see Him “the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David:” the divinely-ordained One to give to the world this prophecy,—its own future history; that as we see it fulfilled, all may believe in Him.

In Rev. vi., and in Rev. viii. 1, He gives that history through seven periods of time, of the hostile power; and, as I have

before said, it is this attribute of Omniscience that is marvelous in our eyes.

It is in Rev. vii. we see Him with the Spirit of the living God, giving spiritual life to the ancient house of Israel, and to a great number that no man could number. Here the ascription of praise is "To our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." But the meaning is to the complex Being, as we see throughout the book.

In Rev. viii. we see Him at the altar of God presenting the incense of His own merit, with the prayers of the saints, which ascend up before God out of His hand.

In Rev. ix. we see a long page of history revealed by Him.

In Rev. x. we see Him with a tremendous announcement in His hand, which I have before explained; but although He is here "clothed with a cloud," the symbol of mercy, grace, and everlasting love, the rainbow, is upon His head. "His face as it were the sun, and His feet as pillars of fire," note Him to be the same Being as in Rev. i. 15, 16.

In Rev. xi. we see Him measuring time, as I have said; the same great Mathematician as measured the universe for its construction, and completion. In this chapter we see also all the kingdoms of the world submitted to Him.

In Rev. xii. we see Him born of the Church, and to the Church; the Conqueror over the great imperial power of Rome; and the Christian Church more than Conqueror by His blood.

In Rev. xiii. we see Him in His personality of wisdom, by number defining precisely the duration of the regal hostile power, that which He had before revealed. (Rev. xi. 15.) And as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." What a completeness of sufficiency is herein revealed to us: "To be a God unto thee" (Gen. xvii. 7); provided before the foundation of the world, and fulfilled in time.

In Rev. xiv. we see Him in His relative position to the Jewish Church, after her resurrection and restoration, in His relation

of "the Lamb," as seen in Rev. vii. 10, 14, 17. She is now a believer in Him, as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" and hence the high praises to Him in that name. It is the symbol of Christianity.

In Rev. xv. we see Him the Harbinger of judgment; and in Rev. xvi., the Fulfiller of those judgments.

In Rev. xvii. we see Him revealing the corrupt Church of Rome in all her monstrous sins and hideousness of display. Her description is written in characters of hell.

In Rev. xviii. we see Him revealing the downfall of the Babylon of the whole world.

In Rev. xix. we see the celebration of His eternal union with the Church; it is a spiritual union, that which He so marvelously revealed, and exalted in the dark night of the powers of darkness, just as He was about to shed His blood, and to lay down His life for her. (John xvii. 21—24.) And then we see Him in that future glory He then desired, "THE KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world."

In Rev. xx. we not only see Him the Conqueror over the dragon, which always represents the regal power, "That old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan," but his Judge, the executioner of the sentence (1 John xii. 11), and his keeper in the bottomless pit. The God, the Judge of all, the giver of eternal life to all, who had been One in life with Himself.

In Rev. xxi. we see Him in the eternal city, in the new heavens, and the new earth, and the Christian Church publicly proclaimed His own for ever. When it is written, "I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it," I believe the mind of the Spirit still is, "The Lord God Almighty" still in the Lamb, the temple of the whole body the Church; all dwell in Him, all One with Him for ever,

as in Rev. i. 8, 18,—One Being. The Sonship is lost in the Alpha and Omega, in Him that liveth and was dead, the Almighty : "God is all in all. (1 Cor. xv. 28.)

In the last chapter we see Him still Jesus, the Saviour of the world, "The Root and the offspring of David ;" and still in both these last chapters, the Alpha and Omega, the Three Persons still in One Being, and One Being in Three ; for the Alpha and Omega of Rev. xxi. 6, is God the Eternal Spirit in His distinct Office, making all things new.

Such then is the complex Being of this book, of every chapter,—One God, yet Three in One. The sovereign supreme Ruler of the economy we live under. The glorified Manhood, as propitiation, intercession, mediation ; it steadies the world in its orbit, the universe in its order. "His name shall be called Wonderful." How pertinent His quotation from David : "Did ye never read in the Scriptures. . . this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." (Matt. xxi. 42 ; Ps. cx. 23.)

As I have said, is not His attribute of Omniscience marvellous in our eyes ? Is He not herein Wonderful ? We have seen Him drawing the chart of time, delineating each era, change, calamity, vicissitude, rise, fall, the beginning and the end. Noting every body of our ecclesiastical firmament : the seven stars of Orion, their appearing, and retiring ; He calleth them all by their names. "The book" of Rev. v. reveals to us history, and the chart of time ; as Rev. xiii. reveals to us the hostile power of God. The chart of each individual life of the human family was drawn ere time began : in His foreknowledge He knew every one, and He depicted what He foreknew, and foresaw. All is an open volume to Him, from the beginning to an unending eternity. Reader, let us reflect solemnly as we behold this complex Being of the Apocalypse in this attribute of His nature, Omniscience. And the capacity He has given us to scan the roll with Him tells us we are partakers of "the Divine nature," that we have a soul that is immortal : "The

Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." No other animal but man has this noble attribute with His Creator ; not only has no other the power of speech, but no other has the living voice of His God within Him, the power to speak by Him. He, the Creator, Redeemer, and Restorer of all things, had compassed the end before He began to build the universe. What He purposed He will perform, and all will in time be gloriously complete ; what appears confusion and chaos to those not spiritually taught by Him, is under the rule of One who is infinite repose. It is the Triune God we behold in the Alpha and Omega, and all His attributes are marvellous.

Science is marvellous wisdom : truths reduced to order, to systems. But who can understand the nature of a prescient Being? of Him who is the Author of all sciences, of all the laws of sciences, and thus laid the foundation of all systems ; who in His prescience, omniscience, and omnipotence, is the Creator of every law of nature, scanning their operations and development from the beginning of creation throughout eternity. If worlds become fuel for numberless suns, new heavens and a new earth are formed from their nebula, under the force of eternal laws, under the direction of the Almighty God. The most able astronomers and mathematicians cannot span or measure space ; but God has done it. The geologist, with science for his aid, cannot compute, measure time ; but we see God has done it. We have seen by measure, weight, and number, the universe rose by His command ; and so eras, dynasties, time, and eternity, are all alike poised evenly in His hand. Yes, His is a sceptre ever bathed in light and life, and ever swayed in love. And He is an omnipresent Being, filling all space. Let Ps. cxxxix. be read here : it is marvellous upon the subject ; and still David felt he had no power to grasp it. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." "Hell is naked before Him. And He hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job xxvi.) We have seen Him

adapting eternal laws to eternal uses before they were yet in existence, determining them before creation. "Lo, these are parts of His ways : but how little a portion is heard of him ? but the thunder of His power who can understand !" This is the Being we see in the Book of Revelation : "The first and the last : that liveth, and was dead ; and is alive for evermore."

Need we fear transitions, changes, when all is working out the purpose of God ; when, in answer to faith and faithfulness, He can open a much broader and more lofty door than He ever shuts. Oh, let us follow Him wherever He leads, and by moral and Christian courage shame that sceptical and doubting spirit that is so rife amongst us ! Let us ever keep all His attributes in view, and we shall never fear. He is Almighty over every extremity. It is true David said, "Thy judgments, O Lord, are a great deep ;" and this is so, for who can grasp the idea of a Being of absolute justice, carrying out His purpose of astounding visitations, repeals, total changes, strange vicissitudes, revolutions, a momentary breach of promise (Num. xiv. 34), so that His enemies, and His peoples' enemies triumph. (Josh. vii. 8.) Who can understand the severity of God : this attribute of justice in not sparing His people when He sees it is for the good of all that they should be punished ; the inflexible attribute of justice,—and, as we know, it never militates from mercy ? As we see both fully revealed in the vial poured upon Christ, might we not also expect that justice would be in exercise in the government of communities, and of the world ? "Whom the Lord *loveth* He chasteneth, and *sourgeth* every *son* whom He receiveth." David could say, "All the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." Justice is goodness under the direction of wisdom. And hence the vial of the curse poured upon Christ in the deepest form it could be concentrated : in Him the glory lay beyond the cloud. (Ps. xci. from ver. 13.) So throughout the government of the Father mercy rejoiceth against judgment ;

in this world no vial of wrath can ever fall upon the creature as it fell upon the Substitute for all : He drank it to the dregs. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things." We must evolve good : mercy and grace, from evil ; victory and glory from failure. (2 Cor. xii. 9.)

Can we comprehend the attribute of perfection ? a Being of infinite perfection ? No : but we may rest in the sublime beatitude ; and in union with, I will not say the attribute of love, but with a nature wholly love : as revealed, "God is love." What may we not ask ? what may we not have ? If justice is rendering to everyone his due, love must be just the reverse : a rendering to every one good for evil ; a removing of the due or debt justice exacts, and bestowing in its stead mercy, forgiveness, love : a love that gives all things in the name of Him in whom the reversionary is invested,—the Son of His love. We have the true principle in Romans v. 15—17 : "If by one man's offence death reigned by one ; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." But we must take this chapter upon a broad principle, and not limit it to humanity, according to our finite knowledge ; but give it the range and the scope of the spiritual kingdom of God, and of the spiritual kingdom of the nature of evil.

I believe the evil spirit was coeval with the good Spirit of the eternal God,—*one* foul, base, malignant spirit ; and that God, in the infinite love of His nature,—in the unity of that nature,—purposed to blot out, totally to abolish, that evil nature, by *One*,—Himself ; in *One*,—His Son. We must give this latitude to eternal truth. "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age : " we must desire it, and live and grow by it, and use no longer milk, which is for babes. I am scriptural in what I am teaching. (Heb. ii. 14 ; 1 Tim. ii. 1.) God, in His almighty power and Godhead, in the knowledge of His

nature all holiness, an incorruptibility, and therefore ever producing and giving life, while destroying nothing but evil, purposed to blot out that evil nature. It will be in millions of ages, in cycles of eternity, that He will do this. But the Alpha and Omega, whom we have seen to be God in Christ,—the Arch of covenant grace,—spans eternity, and we must believe. (Eph. i. 9, 10; Rom. viii. 21, 22.)

In *faith* in His own almighty power, inherent attributes purposed, I believe, and I say it cautiously and reverently, the redemption and destruction of the evil nature (Heb. i. 2; ix. 3); but this throughout such countless cycles of the past, and of the future, that none but the devil himself would venture to tempt the God of love, by despising His offer of grace in Christ, in this day of probation which He has given. It is the punishment of unbelief, the penalty of rejection of Christ, that is damning, crushing the soul to hell. God's manner of proceeding with the lost throughout eternity, and eternity, is not revealed to us; but the same God who preached the "*everlasting Gospel*" to Abraham (Gal. iii. 8) did also go and light up one gleam of hope in the dark realm of despair (1 Pet. iii. 19); therefore let us not on the one hand callously extinguish that ray of light; nor on the other hand presumptuously tempt God by speaking flippantly of sin, and of eternal punishment. When He undertook to destroy the evil power, it was not because it was a hostile power to Him, because He could have consigned it to itself to all eternity, or have annihilated it as He would; but His perfect nature of love would reconcile it to Himself, and make it holy by the cleansing efficacy of His own Spirit; and this He did in Christ. (2 Cor. v. 17—19.) We see "the devil and Satan" bound, cast into the bottomless pit, shut up, and a seal set upon him for a thousand years, "and again after a thousand years, let loose upon the earth." (Rev. xx.) And therefore we cannot say if in the cycles of eternity there may not be recovery. The Word of God is engraven in language too

plain to dispute : " Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. xxv. 41, 46.) The mind of the Spirit may mean everlasting in its native self, without any intervention of the Gospel ; but such an interposition of grace may take place. But who would commit themselves to cycles of torment in a lake burning with fire, when the gift of eternal life is offered now ? " Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." When we read of " everlasting life," the life of God is meant : this is eternal in its native self ; from the nature of essential holiness He is an Incorruptibility, and can never know decay or change. I broach this subject with solemn awe, for it is an awful one to speak of at all : " As ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye *reconciled* to God." This word implies alienation, hatred. Is it possible there can be hatred to God, the all Holy, all Love ? Oh, horrible thought ! How can it be quenched ? by the love of God. But upon the subject of eternal punishment let us not presume ; nor let us harshly extinguish that ray of light, of hope, Revelation gives us : " If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there."

Absolute mercy, pardon, and peace, are pressed upon us under this economy : " Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in." " Thy *mercy*, O Lord, is in the heavens ; Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. How excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O God ! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings." (Ps. xxxvi. 5, 7.)

" Mercy and truth are met together ; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Ps. lxxxv. 10, 11.) David's Psalms are full of the doctrine of mercy. Anthems were sung of it : he grasped it in its infiniteness and sublimity, until he wrote Psalms cxxxvi., cvi., cvii., cxviii. His large soul and mighty faith grasped the why and the wherefore of mercy : how God can be just, righteous, and merciful. God does not render to

any their due for sin in this life, because Christ suffered the penalty, and gave us His righteousness. (Rom. v. 17.) But that gift must be asserted, vindicated, or justified by holiness,—the gift and work of His own Spirit. “Quicken me, O Lord, for Thy *name's sake*, for Thy *righteousness' sake* bring my soul out of trouble.”

“*Blessed* is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord.” There is the truest love and *blessing* in chastisement, just as the blessing upon all the families of the earth lay in the curse upon Eve, and upon the serpent. (Gen. iii. 15.) We must evolve this essential of the kingdom of God; and this can only be done by spiritual travail, faith, patience, and perseverance: “Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.”

There was nothing in Christ's ministry He taught more absolutely than the doctrine of forgiveness: it lies before us in all its completeness relatively to Himself, dependent only upon faith to receive it, and the obedient act of doing so. The pertinent inquiry of the Almighty, “Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?” and His own immediate answer to His question, “Arise, take up thy couch, and go into thine house,” would have set the matter for ever at rest. But we have a persistence of teaching upon the subject: “Thy sins are forgiven;” “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee;” “Her sins which are many, are forgiven;” “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;” “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the *whole world*.” So that we believe in a universal forgiveness, freedom from sin and from the penalty of it, save death, which was the penalty of the Fall,—a deliverance from the sinful body, the second birth into eternal life. Therefore, to charge a true believer with sin,

is to impugn the veracity and prerogative of God ; which was the sin of the scribes and Pharisees,—the one about which Christ kept up a continual warfare with them. Intolerance is the sure sign of ignorance of self, of self-righteousness. And of such we read, "He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy." "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged : condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned : forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." I believe the reign of "the Prince of Peace" will never be brought about but by a thorough carrying out of the principle of forgiveness, by that law of Christian love. See Christ's teaching upon the subject (Matt. vi. 10—15). We are to forgive until seventy times seven : "If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink : for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." There are thousands who are saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter iii.) But what is the coming of Christ? The coming of His own Spirit, of His kingdom, into the heart. If we have these, there will be such manifestations of Himself, such progress of His kingdom upon earth, that none will say, "Where is the promise of His coming? . . . all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

I will give one instance to the point, and let it suffice to reveal the inner life of every child of God. The portrait is most touching. "Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury : and many that were rich cast in much." Reader, contemplate the God-man as He sat there keeping watch, reflecting upon the scene before Him. "And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them"—is He not always calling to us to show us these sights?—"Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they

which have cast into the treasury : for all they did cast in of their abundance ; but she of *her want* did cast in all that she had, even all her living." (Mark xii. 41.) This was a manifestation of the kingdom of heaven in the widow, and to be a revelation of it to the world to the end of time. Contrast it against the grovelling grasp after money at the present time, and can we desire any greater ? Jesus held it up to view, exulted in it ; and the Holy Ghost left it upon record. (John xiv. 26 ; xv. 26.) It was the same meaning in other words as was expressed in Matt. xxvi. 13 : "Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." When we pray for a triumph for the Christian religion, for the everlasting Gospel, for the cause of Christ, and for the coming of His kingdom, let it be for such triumphs as these, and His kingdom will come and appear to all. Every one must give and act according to the gift given to him, whether it be the two mites or "the alabaster box of very precious ointment, or the forgiving of men their trespasses." For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke xvii. 20, 21.) "The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

If the supplication of the dying martyr obtained for the Church of Christ a St. Paul, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts vii. 58—60), may we not like him fall asleep with the divinely moral petition upon our lips, assured that the hearer and answerer of prayer will in like manner grant that His kingdom come with power ? And if the sublimely moral prayer, "Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do," obtained for the world forgiveness, restoration to the Father's bosom, and eternal union with God (John xx. 17), may we not imitate the holy example, believing that some supernatural manifestation of the kingdom of God will be given : "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The love of God as revealed in Christ towards ourselves, and the gift of His Holy Spirit

that we should be holy ; this is the true foundation of ethics, and there is no other. Lord, of *my want* enable me to cast some spiritual offering into Thy treasury.

It is quite true that the God of mercy is ever in the Holy of Holies, upon the mercy-seat (Ex. xxv. 22 ; Levit. xvi. 13), to forgive all who come to Him in Christ ; but mercy, grace, and truth rejected or neglected, retribution must be in proportion to the gross conduct of such neglect and abuse of the grace of mercy, of pardon freely offered. And here as vast a doctrine presents itself to us, the doctrine of divine retribution, as is the doctrine of free grace ; we scarcely perceive where it begins, or know where it will end. Sin and grace cannot coexist ; mercy and grace must be vindicated by the holiness of God's own Spirit ; and if this be not so, retribution must ensue. "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope." (Isa. v. 18, 20, 24.)

I am not here speaking of unbelievers only, of the openly wicked, and profane ; but in Abraham we have an instance of the certainty and extent of retribution for sin,—I will not say more heavy than upon the unforgiven ; but if such penalty remain with grace intervening, with Christ mediating, what must it be when they are removed ? The age Abraham lived in may have been some mitigation of his sin. (Acts xvii. 30.) But with God sin is sin : "At the beginning He made them male and female" (Matt. xix. 4, 6) ; and a law of nature can never be infringed upon without working its end,—death, although the grace of God overarches and overreaches all sin.

In Abraham were the adoption, the covenant, the promises, and the glory. In him was the blessing upon all the families of the earth. In him was the promise of a Son who should be the heir of the spiritual house of the Lord God. (Gen. xv.) Still he profanely, and in unbelief, took Hagar, an Egyptian slave, in pretence of obtaining the Divine promise. And hence the result, history has recorded,—one of the most hostile enemies

to the cause of Christ, one of the greatest antichrists of the world's history : the Ishmaelites, the Arabian hordes, the false Prophet, the Mohammedan heresy, the great Mohammedan power. Let Rev. ix. be read here, and this unclean Spirit will be seen. But what part in the world's history it has yet to take we do not know, unless the Christian Church seizes the opportunity put into her hand at this moment, and by the almighty power of God persuades and converts Islam to the faith of Christ. I say, without this, blackness is looming in the future ; and a prolongation of the actual and spiritual conflict will take place.

The grace of God did not fail towards Abraham, because it stood in Christ, and not in himself ; but the seed of sin cast out of the serpent's root came forth a cockatrice, and his fruit has been a fiery flying serpent. (Is. xiv. 29.) Grace and sin lie revealed before us. Three thousand eight hundred years have rolled on since the calling of Abraham ; but this enemy engendered by him is still upon the field : the evil one on the march. I know that the grace of God overarches, and will overreach even that sufferance of evil ; and that it will ultimately magnify His almighty power, grace and love in Christ : " This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God " is engraven with the point of a diamond upon every wreck and ruin of the fall. " God preached the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall *all nations* be blessed." But this did not sanction sin, or give the Church or the world license to do evil that good might come. No : " The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."

But let God's forgiveness of the Patriarch be our example of forgiveness when he who is tempted, or even falls, be still a child of God, " Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Forgiveness should ever thus be the sequence of faith, as suffering is of sin. We do not know how God in the government of the kingdom of grace will then overrule sin to

His glory. It was no hyperbolical expression Christ employed when He taught us to say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;" and added, "For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." When He said, "Whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained," He spake in the name of the Holy Ghost He had just given. None but those in whom He Himself dwells are duly commissioned agents in His service; for none but God can forgive or retain sin.

He who hath the Key of David,—the spiritual Head of the Church,—can give life, His own Spirit, to the whole body of Islam: "The gift of faith." But if England strengthens that power without lifting up the standard of Christ, a long and sore conflict will ensue. (Rev. xvi. 4—7, 13, 14.) "The Lord will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." Let a great commission of the Gospel be organized to go to Islam, to the Jews, and let equitable terms of territory be made to them; and God will be propitiated, and commend the power, even the power of His own Spirit, without which all else is vain. (Zech. iv. 6.)

If retribution such as this fall upon the true Church on earth, what will not future retribution be on those who have despised the message of love? It is a fearful question, and one we dare not treat lightly. I believe in a material, real heaven, and a material, real hell; prepared, as we are told, for the devil and his angels,—a lake of fire. It may be a region so near the sun, a world so near a sun, that it is one blaze of heat, one unsetting, scorching sun; one arid desert, one torment of the body, one parched and burning tongue, one fierce fire of remorse, one gnawing worm of conscience that dieth not throughout everlasting cycles. Let us flee from wrath to come, to God in Christ; leave the subject where He has left it, and worship Him for our preparatory possession of love to Him, to dwell with Him in a real world.

If we would see another divine example of punishment for sin, we may do so in the development of the Romish antichrist from imperial Rome, from the usurping spirit of the imperial power: "Even now there are many antichrists. . . . They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (1 John ii. 18.) At the time of Christ's advent, and during the time of His public life, there was this open rupture, division in the body of the Jews, for and against Christ. (Luke i.) "Whose image and superscription is this?" revealed the rebels. The whole body of scribes and Pharisees knew nothing of the spiritual, hidden kingdom of Christ, and as they could not enter therein themselves, they hindered others. Their hearts were locked and barred against the reign of Christ, and not only was there this rejection of Him in His life, but the outcry, and outrages committed against Him in His crucifixion, were of the hell of their hearts. "Shall I crucify your King? *The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar. . . . And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. . . . Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, the King of the Jews, but that He said, I am King of the Jews.*" It is spiritual death in an individual, or in a community, not to know, feel, and value above all things the kingdom of God set up in this world; not to desire, and to pray most earnestly for the gifts of His kingdom; not to live in it, and to have it within us; not to desire, above all things, manifestations of it to the world, by special gifts of the Holy Ghost. To be ignorant of, or careless of these, is to neglect our calling to Christ and to His service, and to avow ourselves uncommissioned (1 Tim. iv. 14, 15); while a life of devotion to Christ, and to His service, is a manifestation of Him to the world, the greatest He can enable us to give, because it is the

manifestation of His Spirit. And thus it was when St. John said, "They went out from us, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us," it was immediately added: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." And thus it was Christ said of that body then cut off from Himself and dead, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." And as now, throughout nearly two thousand years, we have seen the Jews scattered to the winds of heaven, do we not see the fulfilment of the awful denunciation? They had said, "His blood be on us, and on our children;" and hence His long abandonment of them, His spiritual disavowance of Himself from them; and the divine sufferance of the antichrist, the Romish antichristian system that was developed from the usurping spirit of Rome, from that spirit of the world that cried, "We will have no king but Cæsar."

As we now look back, almost throughout this first Christian dispensation, upon that corrupt hierarchy of Rome, upon that power so hostile to the reign of Christ, should we not fear sin, unbelief, worldliness, and alienation from God? "Some men's sins are open before hand, going before to judgment," thus David could say, "All the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. And some men's sins they follow after." And hence this great doctrine of retribution. The consequences of sin are tremendous in life, and generations after it was committed, as we see in the histories of these two beasts, the Romish and Mohammedan antichrists (Rev. xiii. ; ix. ; xvii. 3, 4, 5, 6), both in prophecy, and fulfilled prophecy. And if this be the consequences of sin in this world, I believe we can form no more conception of what retribution will be in the future than we can of the glory that will be revealed in Christ. There is a school that denies the doctrine of the

atonement, and when that is denied, sin, in our estimation, soon dwindles into a thing of no real existence; but if we receive the truth of what it cost God in Christ, we shall have some adequate conception of what it really is, and never dare to think lightly of the first step in the downward course of the first approach of evil.

But what I want my reader to see is that it is this Being of the Apocalypse, this Being who has "the key of the house of David," of the house of ancient Israel, who has also the key of all the nations upon the earth; who is alike the God and Father of all the nations upon the earth. He can in one moment give His Spirit to all, as He did to the Church on the day of Pentecost: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." We are told, a nation shall be born at once: "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God." Let this chapter be read here, Isa. lvi. These two interpretations of this marvellous prophecy of the book of the Revelation,—this sudden arrest in Rev. x., in the *sixth* Church, under the *sixth* trumpet, and the resurrection of the house of Israel under the *sixth* seal,—do call forth such earnest searching of the Scriptures, such weighty and solemn reflections as these:—Shall the millennium now be brought in? Shall this resurrection of the house of Israel take place now? Shall Islam be now converted to the religion of their father Abraham, of the true God? Shall the Romish corruption be won from its fearful perversion now? Shall heathendom be won now? Shall Paganism fall now? These are questions to be answered by the true Church of Christ *now*. As I have said, we are the holders, and the keepers of His standard still; and He is with us, and in us, so that we have the *power also* to plant it in the heart of every nation upon the earth; but the opportunity neglected, it will be lost, and the prolongation of the other interpretation will take place. I

know the taking of the kingdoms of this world must be done with *extreme caution*: by prayer, by love, by "the Spirit of Christ," and not by carnal weapons; or we may bring about the very collision, the warfare, and spiritual conflict, and consequently the very loss we wish to avoid. "He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me is love." Let this be our banner. The very "Prince of this world" is at this moment holding forth to the Christian Church his sceptre; and she may ask what she will, and obtain it, if she knows how to ask, and how to turn to account what he has to give. (Esth. v. 2, 4, 6.) But I speak reverently of this sceptre of the kings of the earth; for it is under the sceptre of Christ: He has all means temporal and spiritual to bestow.

Then let us turn to His portrait once more,—to the living object left us upon the field, to "the Leader and Commander" in the world's great action; and we shall not fear even the last great conflict in the place Armageddon.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." "Fear not; I am the first and the last." "I,"—doubtless meaning the great I AM of the everlasting covenant (Exo. iii. 14),—"I, He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Let us analyze these three words, *liveth*, *dead*, *alive* for evermore. This Being, invested with all power, said He was the Christ; but He *liveth*. The word seems to apply to all time: He who ever was, as I have said, referring to Exo. iii. 14, the One Almighty, and eternal God,—not only self-existent, but existence,—*liveth*. "I have power to lay down my life, and power to take it again,"—*liveth*. The body died, but He who was existence lived (John x. 17, 18),—*liveth*.

"And was *dead*." What does this word reveal to us? that the God-man died: was a substitution for the human race, in time to abolish death. (Rev. iii. 14—18.) It teaches us the

doctrine of the atonement in the largest, broadest sense it can be taught: a perfect sacrifice for sin, or why should the God-man die? It was not for Himself: it was for the human race: "If one died for *all*, then were all dead." (2 Cor. v. 14.) Here is the universality of the death of Christ for all. And the nature of His death was satisfaction to the demand of justice. The penalty that was due to the sinner,—to ourselves,—was laid upon Him: "The JEHOVAH hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Is. liii.) "He hath made Him sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 19—21.) That is, He was clothed in the filthy garments of sin. (Zech. iii. 1—6, 12, 13.) He died as a transgressor: absolutely bore the curse, the penalty, of sin, and so redeemed us from the curse of the law. (Gal. iii. 13.) This truth was taught us in the history of our first parents, by Christ in Abel, and by His Spirit throughout Revelation. He took from us our fallen, sinful state, and put upon us all that He was heir to: "Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." It was the God-man who died, and we are heirs of the glory of God. (Rev. xxi. 11.) "And was *dead*." He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

"And, behold, I am alive for evermore." There was nothing Christ told His disciples more absolutely than that they must be witnesses of His resurrection. Mary was specially chosen to be a witness; and there is nothing more plainly and repeatedly recorded in the Word of God than the fact of His resurrection, and how it was attested by many witnesses. He had said He should rise again; and He Himself gave the express opportunities to many, that they might fulfil the Divine will upon so important a point of Divine truth. (Matt. xxviii. 6, 9, 16—18; Mark xvi. 9, 12, 14, 15, 19; Luke xxiv.; John xx.; xxi.; Acts i. 3—11; ii. 32; iii. 15; v. 31, 32; x. 39—41; 1 Cor. xv. 5—8.)

This public attestation of the fact of the resurrection was

most important, because we now know Christ to be the great spiritual Head of the Church, from whom we receive light, life, peace and all things; or as Peter taught: "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." And He said also the Holy Ghost is Witness of these things. (Acts v. 32; ii. 33.) "And, *behold*, I am alive for evermore." Reader, do you *behold* this great High Priest "after the power of an endless life"? Do you believe in Him, that He can give to you, to every one, His own Spirit,—the Holy Ghost? to the Jews, to Islam, the Roman Catholics, to Pagans, and to heathens? Pray for this, and it will be brought to pass: "Ask, and ye shall receive."

If one we had loved on earth, of whose love and devotion we were well assured, had passed into the heavens, and we are thinking of that one there, still deeply interested in all the concerns of earth, commissioned to be a ministering spirit to those still wrestling there, and so as far as that commission extends is obtaining for them direction, a safe course, how much more may we think of this glorified Almighty Being of the Apocalypse in heaven; He who has been with us upon earth, our elder Brother, who trod this thorny road, whose temples streamed with gore from thorns, whose hands and feet were wounded with nails, whose pierced side had yielded saving life, who resigned His Spirit to His God with the incense upon His lips, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do,"—I say, how much more may we think of Him, how much more may our souls rest upon Him, confident of what He is doing for us, and confident of what He will do for time, and for eternity. Let not even this portrait of the Apocalypse come between us and Him (Exo. xx. 4); but in spirit and in truth let us worship Him in this glorious attitude towards us in which He has revealed Himself: "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I

am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

We have now seen the Lord Jesus Christ in His birth, announced by angels; in His childhood, doing His Father's will and work; in His public ministry, working miracles, and doing good to all; manifesting the Father, revealing the God; in His death atoning for the sin of others,—or the God could not have died, making a perfect satisfaction to justice by the sacrifice of Himself. In His resurrection, without any human agency, we have seen the witness of Himself, that He was God. We have seen Him the Creator of the universe; and also in His restoration to power and glory, to supremacy and eternal rule: "The first and the last."

Under this spiritual Head and Government His Church may now go to the Jew, to Islam, and to the Gentile of the whole world; she may now go afresh with His great commission, at the end of this *sixth* period; and I am sure if she be faithful, He will be faithful also. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and fountains of waters.

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen."

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

"Because I live, ye shall live also." This is the pinnacle of the Gospel. I must therefore again commend my last volume to my reader, "*Truth and Work.*"

"These things saith He that . . . hath the key of David."
(Rev. iii. 7.)

"I go that I may awaken him out of sleep." (John xi. 11.)

This trumpet is now sounding, throughout the realm of earth,—
The voice of God in human form, to whom her womb gave birth;
The voice of "the JEHOVAH GOD," that liveth, and was dead,
Who, by Moses, like a flock, His ancient people led.*

Voice of the God of Jacob,—of David,—Israel,
Who speaks, and it is done—whose laws obey His will;
All culminating ever, to one almighty plan,
To one magnificent design, of Israel's great "I AM."

Oh house of Abram, Judah; of Aaron,—David,—see,
The Father, Son, and Spirit, are calling now to thee:
The moment is now come, when they should reappear,
Stand up again for Israel, as foreshown by every seer. †

The *sixth* seal has been opened, the *sixth* loud trumpet blown,
And David's God is waiting, to restore His ancient throne; ‡
But by faith in the Messiah, you still must come to God,
He is the Alpha, Omega, the ever-living WORD,—

"The first and last," who now proclaims, He hath the ancient key,
The gift of His own Spirit, the gift of Deity;
To restore the house of Israel, one in the Temple, love,
To reign in her a thousand years, as He ever reigns above.

* Ps. lxxvii. 20; lxxviii. 52; lxxx. 1.

† Ps. cxv. 10—12; cxviii. 3; cxxxv. 19; Dan. xii. 1; Isa. lxii.;
Matt. xxiii. 39; Rom. xi. 23—26.

‡ Luke i. 32, 33.

What is this key of David? Ask David's Lord, and see,
For "the Holy Ghost" is in His hand, ready to pour on thee:
"The promise of the Father," the life He has to give,
If you will now believe Him, "the Lord of life" receive.

He is the key of heaven, of office, service here,
Whom God in mercy took from you, that His kingdom might
appear;
The contrast and distinction, between a body dead *
And one of life and glory, fed from the living Head.

His voice is now proclaiming, throughout this Christian land,
"I go that I may waken him," from sleep,—from death's cold
strand; †
From shame and stupefaction, from corruption; for they say,
"Lord, by this time he stinketh:" beholders all give way.

As when in tears He utter'd, this mandate of the God
With groans, lov'd "Lazarus, Come forth,"—rise from beneath the
sod;
And the body lifeless, putrid, bound hand, and foot, and face,
Came forth in heavenly likeness, in healthful form and grace.

So then through twenty centuries, that omniscient One beheld,
The ancient house of Israel, rise from Aceld'ma's field; ‡
Free from corruption, blood,—from curse and death set free,
Come with me, unbeliever, to the grave's mouth and see.

"I saw another angel, ascending from the east ||
With the seal of God," His Spirit, which is the key of death; §
And then a movement, noise, a shaking of the bones,
And the tribes of ancient Israel, ascended from their tombs. ¶

* Zech. xii. 10; xi. 7; x. 14; iv. 2—6; Jer. xxxi. 31—37 Luke xxiv. 49.

† John xi.; Ez. xxxvii.

‡ Matt. xxvii. 25; Acts i. 19, 20. || Rev. vii. 2. § Rom. viii. 11.

¶ Ez. 37; Rev. vii.

The ranks of God's great army, in this *sixth* section time,
 Oh, look again, dear reader, the vision is sublime;
 Beneath the *sixth* great seal, beneath the trumpet *sixth*, *
 Lies still this Woe, or Weal : Thy prefix, Lord, affix.

Thou on the throne of David,† who hast this ancient key,
 Bid now "the Church of God" to rise, be this her destiny :
 Her bones are dry, her body cold, bound in the bands of death ;
 "Oh prophecy, and come, from the four winds, O breath !"

Head of the universal Church, Thou hast this key of life,
 Come now, in this *sixth* period, take back the faithless wife ; ‡
 Restore her to Thy kingdom, now to Thy throne, to Thee, ||
 And the whole world will worship, our reigning Deity.

Come, then, almighty One, and One in Three now come, §
 "Seal of the living God," seal the whole *world* Thine own ; ¶
 Prescient, omnipresent, omniscient, loving too,
 This is a small and easy thing for *Thou* to-day to do.

But consistent with Thy wisdom, we kneel, submit to Thee,
 And worship that whatever come, earth will Thy glory see : *
 Thou having loved Thine own, wilt love them to the end, †
 Although to crown Thy work, Thou should'st not now descend.

* Rev. ix. 13 ; x. ; xvi. 12, 13, 16.

† Luke i. 32, 33.

‡ Jer. iii. 1 ; Ex. xvi. 15, 30, 32, 35, 38, 59, 60, 62. || Rev. iii. 21.

§ "Till we have sealed," Rev. vii. 3 ; i. 8, 11, 17, 18.

¶ Rom. xi. 15.

* Ps. xlvii.

† John xiii. 1.

NOTE.

THE following lines were written before the body of Islam was brought before us in the manner it now is, by the Isle of Cyprus being annexed to British dominion,—months before we heard of it relatively to ourselves. I may therefore add here, that the circumstance of annexation does seem a direct voice from God to the Christian Church to go into the field of labour opened, to plant the standard of Christ, and to declare no compromise, no peace, but upon the most honourable terms for Christ and His cause. It does seem preposterous for England to strengthen and protect a power whose time is come, according to this first interpretation of seven periods of 666 years, to die out,—the Euphrates to be dried up. (Rev. xvi. 12.) Let her beware how she does so, for the act is absolutely at once changing our position and helping forward the transition to seven periods of 2,000 years. The Crimean war, without any earnest plea for the cause of Christianity, was such a protection to that antichristian power so marvellously revealed to us in Rev. ix., the very moment before the sudden arrest of the cause of Christianity is made to us in Rev. x. Oh, I say, let us fear to protect that power of Islam without imploring it to embrace our faith. If we do, the acquisition of Cyprus will be peace without honour. In the working of God's kingdom, and of His providence, may not the Maynooth Grant, to protect and strengthen the Romish corruption, have been the cause of the disestablishment of our Church in Ireland? We cannot run counter to Him without loss, dissolution, and gain to the hostile forces. This is one of the first of the laws of warfare.

"The *sixth* angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the *east* might be prepared" (Rev. xvi. 12): that the Jews may return. The true Church of Christ has now the power to pour out this *sixth* vial, to staunch the wound of Islam heresy, to do these works of God; and if she does not do them, the *third* vial will be poured upon the visible Church. (Rev. xvi. 4—7.)

The writer had intended writing this interpretation of seven periods of 666 years in a more summary condensed form, but the time is passed for her in any way to overtax her power, her brain.

DOES GOD PUNISH SIN?

*Hagar, whence camest thou? And whither wilt thou go?
And she called the name of the JEHOVAH that spake unto her,
Thou God seest me. (Gen. xvi. ; xxi. 9—21.)*

Stand still my soul in awe, before poor Hagar's God,
As sun and moon stood still, obedient to His Word;
"Until Israel had aveng'd themselves, upon their enemies,"
So that no day like that has been, of two such witnesses.*

An action real, and spiritual, was brought upon the field,
Still strengthen, Lord of hosts, that Thy people never yield:
By miracles of grace, by power without, within,
Thou who didst raise the siege, be glorified therein.

"The mystery of God" is grandly open'd here,
And "the mystery of sin," by a worm, Lord make them clear!
Thou who wast in the desert, to hear a breathing there,†
Be nigh to hear and answer, this short but earnest prayer.

An Egyptian slave, an outcast, is set upon this field,
Whose wrongs, and infant's cry, to JEHOVAH GOD appeal'd;
And He was there to answer, as He is always by,
Prompt to answer prayer, the feeblest, humblest cry.

The God of Abram, Sarah,—of Hagar, Ishmael too,
"Shall not the Judge of all the earth, do" what is "right" to do?
Grace is grace, and sin is sin; both voices here are heard,
Upheld in majesty sublime, who shall not fear their God?

Sarah to Abram said, The Lord restrains my prayer,
Withholds from me a child to be His son and heir;
So now I pray take Hagar, and raise up seed to Him,
He will accept the sacrifice, and not requite for sin.

* Josh. x. 9—14.

† Ishmael, God who hears. (Gen. xvi. 11.)

Contrast the faith of Hannah, who never left His throne,
 Until she had obtain'd of Him, a son to be His own;
 The spirit, meek and sorrowful, ask'd, sought, and knock'd in
 prayer;

And hence the contrast, and result 'tween the two handmaid's fare.*

When Hagar saw she had conceiv'd, her mistress was despis'd,—
 No more a chosen one of God, but rejected in her eyes.

Sarah retorted in her turn, to him she lov'd before,—

"My wrong be on thee, doubly false: sin lieth at thy door."

"JEHOVAH judge 'tween me and Thee!" And Abram, sore
 afraid,

In "the mystery of sin" in turn, retorted on the maid;

"She's in thy hand what seemeth good, to thee may now be done,
 And Hagar, hardly dealt with, fled" through desert, sands, and
 sun.

But God in mercy had prepar'd, a well and met her there
 With the keen questions, Hagar, where fleest thou?—from where?
 "I fled here from my mistress." Return, replied the Lord,
 In passive non-resistance, shall now be thy reward.

"I will multiply thy seed, that it cannot number'd be,"
 For thou shalt bear a son, who shall be a sword to Me;
 The JEHOVAH GOD hath heard, thy affliction and thy prayer,
 In this "waste wilderness" of Shur, when none but I was here.

"And he will be a wild man,"—his hand 'gainst every man,
 And a voice thrill'd through her mystically, I AM Abraham's
 I AM.†

"And she call'd the LORD, who spake to her, Thou God seest me,
 For she said, Have I here look'd, for Him that seeth me?"

And the bondmaid fearlessly obey'd, return'd to servitude,
 Nor do we hear one word of plaint, though o'er evils she might
 brood,

Let her unknown course instruction be, to follow where God leads,
 For whatever trials lie before, He still hears One who pleads.

* 1 Sam. i. 11, 16, 18; Luke i. 38, 48.

† John viii. 5, 8.

So she bare a son to Abram, and he nam'd him Ishmael,—
 "The God who hears," though to be one, with the son Israel; *
 But in the intervening time, what conflicts long and sore! †
 Oh, could I now but close the page, and blot out that of yore.

But Sarah saw the lad, borne by the Egyptian slave,
 Mocking herself and son; say, would she spare the knave? ‡
 No, for she said to Abraham, Cast out this woman, child,
 For he shall ne'er be heir with mine,—by God doom'd to be wild.

But the thing was very grievous, to the father patriarch,
 That the God of truth and justice said, Hearken to Sarah, hark!
 For in Isaac shall thy seed be called, my covenant is with him,
 Although upon the other son, I must mark, visit sin.

"Because he is thy seed." || Oh, heaven and earth give ear!
 Had not the flood already, taught thee, my sons, to fear?
 Can the serpent's seed and thine, profanely be conjoin'd,
 My daughters be with Belial wed, sons with mere womankind?

I did put war 'tween seed and seed, § and hence upon this field,
 A most tremendous antichrist, the decree is sign'd and seal'd;
 Four thousand years shall now roll on, and the whole world still
 see,

The unending enmity there is, between all sin and Me.

So Abram rose at break of day, to send away his son,
 A sleepless night, and conscience, may have shown him what he'd
 done;

Hagar once more set forth, and stray'd, into Beer-Sheba's wild,
 But the avenger of the innocent, was there to hear the child.

Her water spent, she cast him, beneath a desert shrub,
 And set her down a good way off, saying, it seems to God,
 "Let me not see the child's death;" and a sacred watch she kept,
 Perhaps throughout a dismal night, for she lift her voice and
 wept.

* Isa. xlii., from ver. 11; lx. 7.

† Gal. iv. 29.

‡ Name originally derived from slave.

|| Gen. xxi. 9—21.

§ "Beer-laihai-roi: the well of him that liveth and seeth me." (Gen. xxi. 19; xvi. 14.)

"What aileth thee," O "Hagar"? fear not, for God hath heard,
 Arise, and hold him in thine hand, for my banner is unfurl'd;
 And a mental reservation, fear silence more than words,
 For in that ghostly desert, were drawn two glittering swords.

"A great nation I will make of him." Her eyes He open'd too,
 To see a well of water pure,—type of what He would do;
 "And God was with the lad," in "The howling wilderness,"
 Oh, universal Father, who'er shall fear distress?

And the youth became an archer, the wild man of the chase,
 "And his mother took for him a wife," to found the promis'd race;
 These are their generations, read down the roll and see,
 Their names by towns and castles, as in Holy Writ's decree.*

Twelve princes he begat, as said the unerring Word,
 And Ishmael then gave up the ghost, but close not the record:
 The chart of God's great purpose, was drawn ere time began,
 To destroy the evil spirit, coeval with His plan.

So every broken law, will in time be overreach'd,
 By the law of life in One, which frees from sin and death; †
 But had not Abram sinn'd, the end had sooner come,
 The kingdoms of this world to Christ, had then been sooner won.

Some glorious promise made, some further grace been given,
 Some revelation of his God, to guide the world to heaven;
 Some increase of His kingdom, "God manifest" to men,
 As later in his day of life, he obey'd the law of ten. ‡

We must now trace on the history, through cloud and sunshine too,
 There's nothing in the womb of time, God cannot bring us through;
 "Cast thy burden on the Lord," commit thy care to Him, ||
 Whose power in Christ is infinite, who cover'd Abram's sin. §

* Gen. xxviii. 12—18. † Rom. viii. 2. ‡ Gen. xxii. 15—18.

|| Ps. lv. 22; 1 Pet. v. 7. § Ps. xxxii. 1; Rom. iv. 7.

Ishmael sav'd Joseph from the pit, to be a type of Him *
 Who in the far, far future too, should blot out Islam sin;
 But the twelve Arabian tribes, still liv'd by plunder, war,
 Commerce and navigation, beneath that eastern Star.

Feuds, rapine, enmity, between the alien race,
 And the seed of Sarah, Abraham, who held the gifts of grace;
 Who were the representatives, of God's abounding love,
 The light He gave to this dark world, the lifeless mass to move. †

The arts of cultivation, some early learn'd to prize,
 Had vineyards, fields, groves, orchards; liv'd peaceful, happy lives;
 Some sent their ships to other shores, e'en to the western world,
 With balsams, incense, spice, myrrh, gold, with their nation's flag
 unfurl'd.

But woe is me, said David, that I dwell in Kedar's tent,
 For when I would have peace, their soul on war is bent; ‡
 "I am black but comely" too, saith e'en Jerusalem,
 As the dark tents of Kedar, curtains of Solomon. ||

But the flocks of Kedar shall be brought, to minister to Me,
 With acceptance on mine altar laid (dear reader read, and see); §
 I will my glory glorify, that the whole world may come,
 To pasture in one verdant field, beneath one vernal Sun. ¶

"Because he is thy seed," good now with evil sown,
 A faithful Father I will be, towards this alien son;
 But the mystery must still increase, "That wicked be reveal'd,"
 To show the world how I hate sin, although "I am thy shield."

"Many are call'd," but few elect,—so absolutely sure,
 That my purpose, will, they must effect, and to the end endure;
 But some so chosen are by grace, to testify of Me,
 To do my work, reveal grace; and this I am to thee.

¶ Gen. xxxvii. 28; xxxix. 1.

* Matt. v. 14.

† Ps. cxx. 5, 7; Isa. xxi. 13, 16, 17.

‡ Cant. i. 5.

|| Isa. lx.

§ Mal. iv. 2.

Oh happy few, chosen and bless'd, proclaim "free grace" and love,
 "The gifts of God" call down on all,—this free grace from above;
 That gifts and grace free-will may work, work with divine decree,
 Till the whole family of man, shall in Christ accepted be.

We cannot trace the history, of those lost alien tribes,
 The page is light, and darkness, profound, and broad besides :
 I leave the sacred record, "The mystery of sin,"
 As "The mystery of God," was seen at work therein.

Twenty-five centuries roll on, and to Ishmael one was born,
 Oh, reader, read with trembling, and not with haughty scorn;
 Mixture, confusion, Babel, evil, and good still see,
 Ye sons of God, and sons of men, tempt not infinity.

A false prophet now comes on the scene, how false and yet how
 true!

An antichrist of vilest spleen, yet much of Abram too;
 "Who is a liar, but the man" who denieth Christ the Lord,
 For whosoe'er denieth Him, denieth the true God.

Mahomet was that antichrist, the false prophet we behold,*
 Who was by the true Prophet, most wonderfully foretold;
 "There is no God but God:" His Prophet in me see,
 Truth, and denial of the truth, are impious blasphemy.†

And hence this second section, of history, rapine, blood,
 Mahomet would be Sovereign, the alone vicar of his God;
 "The apostle of the sword, star,—ruler" of the world, ‡
 See, after fourteen centuries, the crescent still unfurl'd.

Syria, Persia, Egypt, Spain; Asia, and India too,
 Africa, Jerusalem show, what "hell" in one may do; ||
 By force of arms, and mystery deep, the world was overrun,
 Till two thirds of the human race, were in union with Islam.

* Deut. xviii. 15; Acts iii. 22; Rev. ix; xvi. 13, 14, 16.

† John xiv. 1.

‡ Rev. ix. 1.

|| Rev. vi. 8.

A mosque still stands upon the site, where Zion once had stood,
"And the key of heaven is the sword," made good by fields of
blood;

The Moslems' hate and cruelty, towards the outcast Jew,
Once the adopted rival son, shows what hell yet may do.

Yes, still in the far future, what may not yet be done,
By an antichrist thus suffer'd, call'd to avenge a wrong?
To avenge a crime notorious, great, common,—but with God,
To be visited with judgment, my people *hear* my rod.*

In this Christian age of light and grace, shall sin still more
abound;

Men of position, learning, power, be more presumptuous found,—
Godless, unprincipled, pass on, and no man take alarm?
Both heaven and earth are witness, Lord, that Thou didst come to
warn. †

Shall children of holy men—of many, many prayers!—
Be sacrificed to lust by them, sin lawful, without fears?
If a babe's cry in the wilderness, brought JEHOVAH from His
throne,

At the end of this Christian era, will He not surely come?

Oh, Government of Church and State, with His commission in
your hand,

Put down this crying evil, that exists throughout the land!
The measure must be radical, the prisoners set free,—
The God of perfect holiness, is saying this by me.

Yes, Church of Christ arise, with His commission in your hand,
Proclaim forgiveness freely, to the shoal upon this strand:
Oh, staunch this social evil, pour in the balm for sin,
And take with you the legal arm, if you now would work for Him!

The prayers and tears of millions, be incense in His hand †
Who ever lives to intercede, the devil to withstand;

* Mic. vi. 8, 9; John iv. ; viii. 7, 9. † Luke vii. 47, 48.

Yes, holy men, sons, fathers, and mothers still pray on,
Nor ever leave the throne of grace till this great work is done.

Who knows if God will turn, and leave a blessing too?
Oh, that I could but raise one voice, upheave one mighty throe!
He's merciful and gracious, kind, and to anger slow,
But this part of Satan's empire, His command is, Overthrow.

I would the urgency proclaim, for the evil is most rife,
And His power alone within, can raise the siege, give life,—
Shall the impure, unprincipled, the licentious be at rest?
Arise, O God, Thyself arise; Thou doest what is best.

For are there not dead consciences, and consciences, too sear'd,
Too ossified and petrified, to believe Him to be fear'd?
Beings too carnal, animal,—too proud and selfish too,
Who, bearing still the Christian name, His every law eschew?

And some who secretly at heart, are even more profane,—
Ignore the Gospel ethics,—against them e'en declaim;
Who, by their lives and actions, if not in words direct,
In reveries indulge, and dream to this effect?

Hagar but typified the law,—Sarah, the people free,
So we are now to Moses dead, and married, Lord, to Thee;
Sin is not laid to our account,—the blot is blotted out,
So we may sin—and guiltless be, by chance—to any amount.

Hear ye my voice, my people,—believe Me it is mine,
If under Moses' law ye died, how much more under mine! *
When I forgive mine own, I add, "Go ye and sin no more,"
And then if wilfully you sin, sin lieth at your door.

A woman married by the law, is no longer her own,
In obedience, spirit, love, no longer twain, but one;
So the true Church is spiritually, in union one with Me,—
In heart, and life, and purpose one, with the all Holy Three.

* Rev. viii. 3—5.

† Hebrews x. 26—31.

But the broad universal Church, the professors we have heard,
The flippant, spiritually dead, who fear not judgment, sword,
Are under death,—“the wrath of God;” expos’d to endless woe,
For they are not Abram’s seed, but the serpent’s, Hagar’s too. †

Distinguish well ’tween Abram’s sin, the age in which he liv’d,
And still his grief and penitence, his life one cry, Forgive! ‡
And “the Just and Justifier” too, of those who still believe,
Did answer faith and penitence, the repentant still receive.

If retribution such as this, fall on the Church below,
Shall man accurst dare to assert, there’s no eternal woe?
Infinite mercy, justice, grace, centre in Love Divine,
But the God of perfect holiness, must in that glory reign. ||

There is a hell prepar’d for those, who’re callous, dead in sin,—
Of torment, agony, and fire,—who live and die therein; §
If in the depths of cycles, a day of grace be given,
Will man dare risk, commit his soul to hell, to be forgiven.

Oh sinner trifle not, on that abyss of woe,
But come yourself and bring the world, to God your Saviour now;
Repent of sin, ask mercy, grace, and you will be forgiven,
“Choose you this day whom ye will serve,”—choose between hell
and heaven.

God was in Christ to reconcile, the world unto Himself,
And you can now retake the field, by God the Holy Ghost;
For He will give Him freely, the world He won to win:
He is the Lord Almighty still,—antidote, cure for sin.

“The Lord anointed me to preach, the gospel to the poor,
To heal the broken-hearted, the lepers to restore;
To the captives preach deliverance, recovering to the blind,
The year acceptable to God,” to the masses of mankind.

* John viii. 39, 44. † Gen. xvii. 18. ‡ Matt. v. 48.

|| Matt. xxiv. 41, 46; Rev. xx. 15.

He now says, Extirpate these sins, that call for vengeance, fire,
And I will manifest myself, by, "Friend, still come up higher;"
But if the crying shame remain, you soon will hear my voice
Turn all their waters into blood, my people make your choice.

Restore *my ancient people*, to Palestine,—to Me!
I will not hold my peace, nor rest, till the world this wonder see,—
Until Zion's righteousness go forth, as brightness, lamps that
burn,
Salvation, honour, glory, power, upon her head return.*

Go forth also to Islam, your power is still untried,
For my kingdom is within you, life flowing far and wide; †
Go plant my banner firmly, in every nation's heart,
"Sword of the Lord!" and England, of victory learn the art. ‡

The rite of circumcision, on Ishmael, Abram,
Both in one day reveals, what for Islam may be done; ||
But let this crisis, era pass, this opportunity,
And time will have a sad dispatch, to send eternity.

It is an awful crisis, a moment ripe for change,
A door is opening wider, one of amazing range;
"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give to thee,
A crown of life,"—a crown of souls,—crowns for eternity!

* Isa. lx. 62; Ez. xxxvii. from ver. 19. † John vii. 38, 39.

‡ 2 Cor. i. 4.

|| Gen. xvii. 24—26; xxv. 9.



DOES GOD PUNISH SIN?

We have no king but Cæsar. (John xix. 15.)

His blood be on us, and on our children. (Matt. xxvii. 25 ; Deut. xix. 10.)

All that dwell upon the earth shall worship Him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. xiii 8.)

Roma, and Rome, what a long page! Lies now beneath thy seal,
Nearly three thousand years, of rude estate, woe, weal;
A castle on the Palatine, was all that mark'd the fame,
Of empire, conquest, glory, sin; doom'd to an endless name.

Regal, Imperial glory, "an understanding" rare
To cultivate the gifts of God, had it been used with care; *
But misconstrued, perverted, the light of heaven expir'd,
And hence the page of darkness, the one that has transpired.

That page of Pagan blindness, that develop'd into Rome,
Four hundred temples fill'd with gods, and Roma on her throne;
And at the advent of our Lord, when His banner was unfurl'd,
Her rule well nigh extended, over the then known world.†

One of the four great beasts, that strove upon the sea,
Upon the leaven, element, of leavening mystery; ‡
One of the seven heads, that John in Patmos saw,
The fourth of Daniel, and from both, we now our portrait draw.

"The great red dragon, murderer, the being of the Nile, ||
Who in his own dominion rear'd, his proud memorial pile;
The seven headed dragon of Revelation, time,
Oh would his history were a myth, the vision only mine!

* 1 John v. 20; Virgil, Horace, Ovid, etc. † Matt. iv. 8, 9; Luke iv. 6.

‡ Dan. vii. ; Rev. xiii ; Matt. xvi. 6, 11. || Rev. xii. 3; Eze. xxix. 3.

But number'd is "The man of sin," reveal'd his history,*
 "Let seven times pass over him;" † deep is this mystery;
 "The accuser, serpent, Satan, and devil he is call'd,"
 But as "the dragon," regal foe, he "deceiveth the whole world." ‡

Pilate demanded of the *priests*, "Shall I crucify your King?"
 "We have no king but Cæsar," to him we tribute bring;
 Away, away with Jesus: crucify, crucify!
 "We have no king but Cæsar," whom the Jews now deify.
 "The prince of this world" reigneth, and ne'er can be cast out,
 And live the house of Cæsar,—went up from hearts devout;
 So the Roman judge delivered Christ, to be led away by them,
 And crucified in Golgotha, the lot of the condemn'd.

"His blood be on us," and "upon our children" for ever,
 Oh God of justice, grace, and truth, who, what from Thee can sever?
 Twenty long centuries roll on, and all will witness true
 That Thou art ready to forgive, to receive the guilty Jew.

Upon repentance, faith, and trust, confession of their sin,
 And Thou hast said the time shall come, when they shall look on
 Him

Whom they have pierc'd, despis'd, and mourn as for a son,
 Give *now* this bitterness of heart, to see what they have done! ||

I am persuaded life nor death, angels nor other powers,
 Things present, seen, nor things to come, these alien hearts of
 ours,

Nor height, nor depth, nor creatures, can separate from God,—
 From the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

This golden age has witness'd, of that sin of unbelief,
 Of the murder and rejection, of the Man of Sorrows, grief;
 Of the truth of Christ, eternal truth, of sin surpassing thought,
 So sin is its own punishment, whether God wills or not.

What have the ancient people lost, suffered, and borne for sin,
 By rejecting God in humble form, their effulgent light in Him?
 Their shekinah in the temple, man, His attributes reveal'd,
 Oh, that I could the wanderer meet, upon this open field!

* Rev. xiii. 8. † Dan. iv. 16; Isa. xxvii. 1. ‡ Rev. xii. 9.

|| Zech. xii. x.

Yes, this dispersion of the Jews, throughout two thousand years,
 Their tribulation, hunger, thirst, humiliation, tears,*
 Is severe justice, punishment, judicial dealing here,
 But still a mitigated lot, of what they have to fear.

Does the Father punish sin, or man provoke his doom,—
 Tempt the Almighty, Holy One, to cast him from His throne?
 "His blood be on us!" Read this page, this history of the Jew,
 And tempt not, trifle not with God, lest His blood be too on you.

The love of glory temporal, of power, ambition, pride,
 And legions of the human heart, known, and unknown beside,
 Are sins to be uprooted, or to be visited by God;
 Without the amenable to law, those men cannot applaud.

But the sin of unbelief in Christ, is the one damning sin,—
 "We have no king but Cæsar," the one that murdered Him; †
 "*My kingdom is not of this world*, else would my servants fight."
 Oh, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS," give to the
 world this light!

He made Himself of no repute, but took a servant's form,
 Was found in fashion as a man, and did the name adorn;
 For Himself He humbled, and became obedient to death,
 E'en to the death of death's,—the cross,—example for our faith.

Thus God hath thus exalted Him, and given Him a name,
 Which is above all others, one of undying fame;
 "That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow,
 Of things in heaven, and things in earth:" come Lord and teach
 us how.

And that every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord,
 That God in Him be glorified, be worshipp'd and adored;
 By Jew and Gentile, bond and free,—by the whole world,—instead
 Of the old dragon of "The Word," the world's still living head.

I know not how to write, proceed, my theme seems so severe,
 The world in its distinctive light, stands out so bold and clear;
 But it's in that light of darkness, we worship the great foe, ‡
 Who's leading on its votaries, to everlasting woe.

* Rev. vii. 13, 14, 16. † John xviii., from ver. 33.

‡ Matt. vi. 23, 24.

In multifarious ways and forms, by manifold designs,
He is beguiling, poisoning, corrupting youthful minds;
"Deceiving the *whole world*," "the deceiver" is reveal'd,
And the spiritual dread action, is upon this field.

The young, so irrepressible, by masses are beguil'd,
To be worshippers of rank, is taught to every child;
The glory of Christ's kingdom, is lost in the acclaim,
And hence the infidelity, that is our nation's shame.

Not only utter darkness, abandonment of truth,
But a groping on dark mountains, by professors of its worth,—
A questioning of truth, a scepticism deep,
Even in those who preach, instruct, write, talk, and even weep.

Who can the cause detect, the old serpent lion know, †
For he is coil'd in paradise, lurking where'er we go;
The monarch of the people's hearts, king of the forests too: ‡
As our Lord oft spake in parables, so He still speaks to you.

"All that dwell upon the earth, shall fall and worship him,"
Whose names of the Lamb's book of life, are never found therein.||
And why? Because He ever knew, this heart sin of the mass,
To fall and worship Cæsar,—the sin that worketh death.

This may be done in Church and State, as well as on a throne,
For worship that falls short of God, is to Cæsar or to Rome:
To settle merely in a Church, priests, sacraments, and forms,
Is to surrender light and life,—the grace God puts on worms. §

Does God still punish sin? The Romish antichrist,
Answers aloud upon this field, as seated in her might:
"MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, MOTHER OF HAR-
LOTS, see,—
AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH,"—see, as Christ
did foresee. ¶

Faith in a Church, is Rome: faith in her rites and forms,
Is to renounce the glory, life, that His true Church adorns,—

* Jer. xiii. 16.

† Dan. vii. 4; 1 Peter v. 8. ‡ Zech. xi. 1, 2.

|| Rev. xiii. 8. § Isa. xli. 14. ¶ Rev. xvii. 5.

To submit to imposition, to an eclipse of light.

Lord Jesus, save our children, from such another night!

We love and reverence our Church : her rites as means of grace,
A medium Divine of truth, provided for our race;

But the gifts of grace, salvation, are not within her pale,
But from our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who is within the veil.*

Does God still punish sin? Oh, tempt Him now no more,
Lest He give this woman, antichrist, the power He gave before;
And His blood be on our children, as on the blinded Jews,
Who knew not how His gifts of grace, authority, to use.

"Have faith in God," and worship Him; pray for the lifeless tree,†
Whether the Jewish Church, or Rome, or any other See;
"Have faith in God," and worship Him, and love whom He com-
mends,

For those who faithfully do this, will best serve whom He sends.

Sept. 12th, 1878.

NOTE.

WHEREVER there is a Church that enters the sacred precinct of home, to usurp authority there, to teach disobedience and insubordination there, to create alienation, and to sow the seed of discord there, to raise insurrection there,—whether in intolerance of Church principle, or to proscribe the Bible in the home, or both,—it is tyranny and intolerance, that always meet their doom. As also when children are misled, prompted to break one of the Ten Commandments (Ex. xx. 12), and to incur the curse upon doing so (Deut. xxvii. 16), and prompted to wrong doing. And more so, where this is done, where by the power and grace

* Heb. vi. 18—20.

† Mark xi. 13—22.

of God there had been self-sacrifice, and entire consecration to that home ; where the utmost effort after holiness had been in daily exercise. Where there is this spirit, we always find gross vice, and vicious lives, although perfectly protected by a name. Jesuits may be long concealed, but they are always found waiting their opportunity to take their aim.

If I have been understood to say we can be justified in this life by the *perfected* work of the Spirit, I deny having done so. We are not justified by any measure, or by any degree of the gift of the Spirit ; but if we have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the one eternal Spirit, which is God, we are justified by the Spirit, even as we are justified by faith, in however small a degree we may have the gift, even as it is not the amount of our faith that justifies us, but faith even as a grain of mustard seed. It is " Christ Jesus of God who is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and *sanctification*, and redemption ; that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. i. 30, 31.) Then our *sanctification* stands in Christ as completely as our justification. We may be struggling after holiness, but we are holy,—complete in Him. " To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints " (1 Cor. i. 2), " Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.) " By one offering He hath *perfected* for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." (Heb. x. 14, 29.) The Spirit is " the seal of our future inheritance " (Eph. i. 13, 14 ; Rev. vii. 2), but in this life His work is not completed in body, soul, or spirit. (1 Cor. xv. 43, 44.) This will be done at the resurrection of the just, or of the justified. (Rom. viii. 9, 11, 23.) St. Paul says again, " Who hath counted the *blood* of the covenant *wherewith he was sanctified* an unholy thing." The blood of Christ is not only justifying, but sanctifying ; our sanctification and acceptance with God are in Him, and that without break or breach. And the more knowledge we have of this state, and the more comfort we draw from it, the more grievous will sin be to us. " Preserve me, for I am holy," said David : the absolute-ness of the grace of the Spirit created in him the desire to be preserved ; and when for a moment he fell, the earnest desire to be renewed : " Renew a right spirit within me. Take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Uphold me with Thy free spirit." (Ps. li. 10—12.)

And hence the passage I have so often referred to : " Ye fools and blind : for whether is greater, the gift, or *the altar that sanctifieth the gift?*" (Matt. xxiii.) It is the altar,—the blood of Christ,—that sanctifies all : the Offerer, and the gift. Oh, let us beware how we say,

"Whosoever shall swear by the *altar*, it is nothing"! nor let us put a morsel of bread in the place of that *blood*.

"Whosoever is angry with his brother *without a cause*, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, *Raca*,"—a word of contempt, empty, vain, foolish,—“shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, *Thou fool*, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the *altar*, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” (Matt. v. 22—24.) Oh, let us beware how we trifle with holy things,—how we tempt God, and do despite to His Holy Spirit! It is His blood that sanctifieth the gift,—His Spirit by which we are sanctified and justified, and not by any measure or degree of it: “God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit,”—justified in the assertion of Himself that He was God. (1 Tim. iii. 16.) The Godhead was in Christ, and not the Spirit by measure. But we must come with our spiritual sacrifices to God, by Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. ii. 5.) His *blood* sanctifieth the gift.

This subject is so important, that the preface to the next volume to be published—the fourth edition of the *Spiritual and Physical History of our Fallen and Redeemed World*—will be on the “*Spiritual Hierarchy of God*,” and a small volume will be written (D. V.) on the “*Kingdom of God*.”

INTRODUCTION.

IN my Introduction to my last volume on this Book of the Revelation, I said, "I believe if now such a protest were made against Romanism as was made at the time of the Reformation, and if we were entirely to expel its subtle spirit from Church and State, at the same time putting down as much State as possible, God could and would so otherwise interpret this prophecy that great glory should accrue to His people." It was God who then spake in me, because He had this second interpretation to be laid before them; it was revealed to me in a moment, although for years with prayer and diligent study I had sought for any other explanation of the mystical seven, if any such might be found. Thus proving that the first interpretation was to be completed first. This second interpretation would have been before the public months ago, but for an unavoidable delay of the publisher.

The prophecy does admit of the two interpretations, and thus I have named this last one, "Divine Decree, and Free Will." As some one has said, "That which is at once the glory and shame of man, is his power to choose" his will. But let me not be misunderstood upon this vital point. I am not

going to teach that we can do anything worthy of the Lord's coming. "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof," is our true position. I say, I am not going to teach that we can merit heaven by our obedience, that we have a free will to work out a justifying obedience, or that we can in any way bring anything in our hand to God but the blood of Christ, anything save in the name of that blood. Oh, no: God has put His veto upon any such false teaching. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20, 23.) But God does require moral courage, a high standard of obedience in proportion to the light we have received, to the knowledge we possess, and in proportion to the privileges we enjoy. We cannot now better commend His Word to the whole world to whom we have given it, than by conformity to it ourselves. We must as a nation and a people be "living epistles" of the truth of Christ, and exemplifying it by our lives. He does expect holiness, obedience, and still higher attainment in proportion to the work of His Holy Spirit already wrought upon the heart. He does expect *conformity to the Word*, now that we have it as we have, taught, preached, interpreted, translated into every language, multiplied a thousandfold, and presented to all nations for their acceptance; I say, we must now as a nation practically accept it from God for ourselves. "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it." (Luke xi. 28.) And our Lord's teaching upon this subject is plain, which is not the withering teaching of works subversive of the doctrine of life in Himself, but as a consequence of it. And, therefore, I shall not be heretical, but strictly Scriptural. He said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. vii. 21.) And after He had not only proclaimed the letter of the law, but revealed the Divine Spirit

of it, He delivered that sublime epitome on the subject, that nothing can surpass. (Matt. vii. from verse 24.) And again He said, "If a man love Me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him; and we will *come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" (John xiv. 23.) Although the coming of Christ to sinful men is absolutely and alone of grace, does He not here make His coming in the fulness of His presence somewhat conditional? And this is precisely what I mean by free will. When we do know God and love Him, we are no longer to consult flesh and blood, to be in subjection to any passion, or misrule whatever, but to overcome, to keep His words. And if we do not do this, we do sin against the Holy Ghost, and for sin against Him there is no forgiveness. (Matt. xii.) God has decreed the salvation of His people, and that that salvation shall now very quickly be brought in; but without good heed to His Word, "the sure word of prophecy," without the exercise of the faculties of free will, salvation will be delayed, till the "right spirit," the spirit of obedience be induced. "He that overcometh," eight times repeated in this prophecy, was not written for nought.

But let me be thoroughly sound upon this vital point. We have really no free will: the motions of our nature are continually to do evil; for although we are virtually freed from the thralldom of Satan by Christ, still, to be actually freed, we must be brought into contact with His nature, with "the Spirit of truth" in His Word; for His Spirit in us can only do His will. And therefore, what is the plain state of the case of what I would urge by Divine decree, and free will? Clearly this, that God has decreed the salvation of His people; predestinated them to salvation by His Son; to eternal life by His Son (2 John v. 11); and we must receive this absolute truth into our hearts before we can receive His Holy Spirit to do His will (Eph. i. 13; Acts xix. 2), to obey. We must not put obedience before faith, nor attempt to attain to it to establish

years, from the time of the calling of Abraham to the end of 4662 years. This is the one with which we have now to do: one of the seven seals, one of the seven trumpets, and one of the seven vials representing one of the seven periods. The page of history under the seal and trumpet is of the same period; but under the seal the regal enemy is revealed, and under the trumpet is ecclesiastical history, while the vials close the periods.

These seven periods, under *this theory*, cannot date from Adam, because the time of the end would now be more than passed. But the prefaces to the seals and trumpets being rooted in the typical economy, tell us the seven periods date from the time of the calling of Abraham. (Rev. iv. 8; iii. 4, 5.) And this was the meaning of the command, "Write the things which thou hast seen" (Rev. i. 19): the things seen in the *seven* candlesticks, in the past typical economy.

Rev. xiii. 18 is the key to this mystical seven, or the explanation of the Scriptural important number: "Here is wisdom;" that is, the divine wisdom acknowledged by Daniel as given to him by God,—the spiritual enlightenment that God only could give him. (Rev. v. 11; ii. 14; xx. 21; xxiii. 28—30.)

"Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man; and his number, six hundred threescore and six." Our translators have added here, "And his number *is* six hundred threescore and six," which is obviously wrong, for it makes the last number the first,—that is, it makes them one, whereas the last number is not the same: it is an added one, although it relates to the first. "The number of a man" means of Nebuchadnezzar: "Let a beast's heart be given unto him, and let *seven* times pass over him." (Dan. iv. 16.) And then, "His number, six hundred threescore and six," relates both to "the third part" under the trumpets (Rev. viii. 7—9, 12; ix. 15—18),—666 years; "the

third part" of two thousand years ; and also to the 666 years remaining of the existence of the beast,—the seventh period : seven times 666 years. The history in this codicil, in Rev. xiii., brings the period down to the end of the sixth period, as is evidenced from the opening of Rev. xiv. : there the vision is the same as is seen at the end of the sixth period (Rev. vii.). Thus do we see how the *seven times* in the history of Nebuchadnezzar subserved alike two meanings in the mind of the Spirit,—seven times seven, forty nine, the period of his reign ; and as a type or revelation of the reign or existence of the spiritual enemy, "the man of sin:" for spiritually the beast of the book of Daniel is the beast of the book of Revelation, of the world's history. I say relatively to the *spiritual* enemy, the *seven times* signified seven rounds of time, or *seven periods of 666 years*. The words of the prophet are most striking : "Leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass in the tender grass of the field ; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven." (Dan. iv. 15.) Yes : the spiritual enemy is in this world, in the green grass of the field of God, intermixed in His Church, to be watered with the dew of heaven. Let her remember this, and not think of him only as an enemy to exterminate. Let us trace an outline of the prophecy in this book of the Revelation according to this theory of seven periods of 666 years.

I have said the first seal, the first trumpet, and the first vial, represent the first 666 years, dating from the calling of Abraham. Then, under the first seal, is seen the *regal* enemy of the dynasty of the Pharaohs and of the Canaanitish kings ; for it is the regal enemy revealed under the seals, or the spiritual usurper who went forth conquering and to conquer. (Rev. vi. 1, 2.)

The history under the first trumpet is of the same period ; but ecclesiastical history, rooted in the Mosaic economy. The hail, fire, and blood signify Divine justice under the economy

of the law, the penalty of transgression. (Rev. viii. 7.) Here all native purity is seen to have perished, and the earth to be consumed by that fire of eternal justice, as before the Flood. (Gen. iii. 15, 17—19.) The blood refers to those executions of the sentence of the law, so tremendous and awful, which we read of under the law (Num. xv. from verse 32 ; xxvii. 12—14 ; Josh. vii.), and which were intended to show us what the state of all of us—of the whole world—would have been without the Mediator, Christ,—without the intervention of the Gospel of Christ. “By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified,” is the truth proclaimed under this first trumpet. The law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ ; or, as it is here so strongly expressed, “The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, *and they were cast upon the earth.*” As I have said, the seven periods of 666 years could not date from Adam, because now they would have been more than fulfilled ; neither could they date from the beginning of the Christian dispensation, or the economy of the law would not have been introduced under the first trumpet.

The first vial, said to be poured upon the *earth* in distinction to the community of God’s people, represented throughout this book by heaven, was the utter extermination of the Canaanitish nations at the end of these first 666 years. (Rev. xvi. 2.)

The rider on the red horse, under the second seal, was the dynasty of the Kings of Israel and Judah ; and, without doubt, the *regal* enemy of all surrounding nations, with whom they were constantly at war during the next 666 years. The *red* horse was significant of those bloody wars.

During that period there was no openly-acknowledged Divine government ; and thus it is that under the second trumpet there is none revealed but the spiritual death,—dissolution of the Levitical economy, and a temporal kingdom cast into the seat of Divine government as a scourge for rebellion from God.

The dynasty of the prophets then represented the Divine government. (Rev. viii. 8, 9.)

The second vial was the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the captivity of the holy people. 2 Kings xxiv., xxv., with Jer. lii., should be read here.

The black horse under the third seal signifies the calamities, dispersions, afflictions, and miseries of the people of God during the last 666 years of the Jewish dispensation. And the balances in the hand of the rider upon the black horse were an *Omen* of justice,—of that justice which demanded the life of the Son of God, a ransom for sin, in the beginning of the next, the fourth period; a claim which He only could meet, as had been evidenced by ages. I say, these balances were an *Omen*, because the regal enemy under the seals is revealed under the rites of the Roman augur, and it was usual for the augurs to appear with such omens in their hand. Imperial Rome was in power when this prophecy was written; and the body of the augurs were the most influential in Rome.

According to this theory, or manner of interpretation of this prophecy, the great star seen to fall under the third trumpet, must signify the great system of heathen mythology, of idolatry, or the pagan religion of the Greeks and Romans, that which ultimately developed itself into the Romish anti-christ. (Rev. viii. 10, 11.) At this distance of time it is almost impossible for us to realize the truth of what that system was, or how the true Church escaped the engulfing vortex. (Rev. xii. 1.)

Also according to this theory the third vial must have been the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; and the final dissolution of the Jewish nation. (Rev. xvi. 4—7.) This vial brings the date down to the year 4000 of the world's history. It is true the destruction of Jerusalem did not occur till seventy years after this date, but I do not think the vial refers so much to the actual destruction of the city, as to the final

downfall of the nation ; which commenced before Christ came, when the Jews surrendered their independence to Rome, became tributary to Rome. From that time, to use the expression of the sixth vial, "The *drying up*" of the holy people began. Subjection to Rome was the beginning of the vial ; and refusing to pay the tribute demanded brought about the end.

"So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations ; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations ; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations." (Matt. i. 1—7.)

But before proceeding, let us pause to inquire here how this prophecy can admit of two interpretations so different ? I answer, The thing is possible ; for "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." (Prov. xxvii. 19.) "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be ; and that which is done is that which shall be done : and there is no new thing under the sun." (Eccles. i. 9.) And thus it is we find type, and biographical type over-reaching type ; prophecy over-reaching prophecy ; and shadow over-reaching shadow, that is in meaning. By *nature* the heart of man remains the same, and it is only as we receive Christ that all things become new.

The being named "Death," under the *fourth* seal, was Imperial Rome ; and he who followed him, named "Hell," was the Romish Antichrist of the next 666 years,—of the fifth period ; said here to follow with him, because his works are seen under the next *seal*, as there was no *Imperial* enemy to reveal in that next, the fifth period. (Rev. vi. 7, 8.) The history is ecclesiastical, both under the fifth seal, and the fifth trumpet. Thus the second being, "Hell," was an *omen* in the language of the Roman rites, and a prophecy in the language of the Christian religion. An *omen* : as the crown, the great

sword, and the balances were omens under the first, second, and third seals. And as I have said, an omen of the Romish Antichrist under the next seal. (Rev. vi. 9; x. 11.) The omens do relate to the seals, as the "woes" under the fourth trumpet (Rev. viii. 13) relate to the trumpets.

Under the *fourth* trumpet all the powers of the hierarchy of God are seen smitten,—the sun, moon, and stars. (Rev. viii. 12, 13.) We must remember, Christ, "The Sun of Righteousness," was smitten in that fourth period, the nationality of the Jews, the Jewish Church, and the priesthood. Although the Christian Church was built upon the ruin, and her inner life strengthened and expanded in proportion to affliction, still she also was persecuted and smitten: a wilderness life was hers during that fourth period (Rev. xii. 6), and before the close of it she was already smitten with Romish corruptions. The faithful in her bosom had borne their testimony, and their course was run; but the *temporal* powers, the visible Church and civil State were smitten. Three "woes" were proclaimed under this fourth trumpet, which related entirely to the conflicts under the next three trumpets.

The *fourth* vial was poured upon Imperial Rome, and *power was given to him*, in the form of the Romish Antichrist, in the fifth period, to scorch men with the fire of false doctrine, with deadly corruption: that was,—the spiritual power migrated from Imperial to Papal Rome. (Rev. xvi. 9, 10.)

This fourth vial brings the period down to the year 666 of the Christian dispensation.

Under the *fifth* seal no regal or Imperial power is seen, but the souls of the martyrs of Jesus; those of the second period of 666 years of this dispensation. There is also a *prophecy*,—the rites of the Roman Augur having now passed away,—Christ speaks to the souls that cry to Him, that they should remain yet a little season till other witnesses of His truth should be killed as they had been. I have said, this *prophecy* has taken

the place of the omens under the other seals, and it related to the martyrdoms, persecutions, and afflictions which extended on into this sixth period,—to those in the time between Wickliff and Luther; and to the martyrdoms committed later by France, Spain, and other nations. But as I have said, no regal or Imperial power is seen under the *fifth* seal, because power, place, and great authority had been ceded to Rome Papal. (Rev. xiii. 2.) This page of prophecy is now one of history; and as we look back upon the field of conflict how well do we recognize the martyr field of blood! (Rev. vi. 9; x. 11.)

Under the *fifth* trumpet,—which page of history is of the same period, of the same 666 years,—the great Mohammedan false teacher, with his hordes of followers, are seen. And this is worthy of particular notice,—that the deeds of blood of the Romish antichrist are revealed under the *fifth seal*; the page of history there is of spiritual conflict, because there was no great leading power like those of Greece and Rome to foreshow, although the revelation made under the seals is of the *regal* powers. And the Mohammedan antichrist is revealed under the *fifth trumpet*. So that by this wise arrangement both those powers, or false religions, which rose at the same time, and were of the same period, were alike foreshown, or revealed. The page of history under the fifth trumpet, is Rev. ix. 1—12. In it these two beasts are revealed *spiritually* allied. (Rev. ix. 11.)

The *fifth* vial was poured upon "The seat of the beast,"—Rome, "and his kingdom was full of darkness:" that which is now a part of history. Papal Rome did thus fall before "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." (Rev. xvi. 10, 11.)

This fifth vial brings the date down to the year 1332 of this Christian dispensation. But just as we have seen the third vial date from the time that the Jews surrendered their independence to Rome, so I think this fifth vial dates from Wickliff.

The pure Word of God poured upon the seat of corruption, was the vial that dried up the unholy leaven,—heresy.

The history under the *sixth* seal is both regal and ecclesiastical, and of the period in which we live,—from the time of Wickliff, down to the year 1998 of this dispensation. From the time of the Reformation the heaven of the corrupt system of Rome became black as sackcloth of hair; and its stars did fall to the ground as untimely figs when shaken of a mighty wind. And all the kings and great men who had been of its dominion fled and hid themselves from the wrath of the Lamb, who throughout this sixth period of 666 years has been seen to be the Supreme Sovereign Ruler of the earth. (Rev. vi. from verse 12.) .

The page of history in the seventh chapter is under this sixth seal; and I think, from the first words of it, “After these things,” it has yet to be fulfilled. But the sealed ones of the history may represent the converted Jews of this sixth period, although I do not think they do; but on the contrary that we may expect a supernatural gift of the Spirit of God upon the Jews, if we pray for it, and believe that they will receive it. The glory revealed in this chapter from the ninth verse is certainly yet to be brought in during the remaining 130 years.

Under the *sixth* trumpet, Romanism is seen to be still further subjugated, and that by the Mohammedan power with which it had been *spiritually* allied. That subjection was by the taking away by the Turks territory that had before belonged to the Romish dominion. (Rev. ix. from verse 13.) Thus do we see again the same wise arrangement in the construction of this prophecy as we saw under the last seal and trumpet. The field of action of the Christian Church, the history of territory taken by her, is under the *sixth* seal; and the field of action of the Mohammedan power against the Romish power is seen under the *sixth* trumpet, but both of the same *sixth* period; and both

powers alike engaged in the destruction of the Romish beast ; or, as it is so strongly expressed in the codicil, "These shall hate the whore, and make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." (Rev. xvii. 16.)

The *sixth* vial will be poured upon the great Mohammedan power, the mystical Euphrates, for the Jewish nation to return and take possession of its ancient inheritance. This *sixth* vial brings us down to the end of the sixth period of 666 years : to the end of the third period of 666 years of this Christian dispensation,—to the year of our Lord, 1998.

But here we should do well to pause, for we are come to the very moment in which we live, and these last tremendous events are fast culminating. The Church of Christ will now be saved with a great salvation, the crown of victory will be hers ; or, if she suffers the gem of eternal truth to be wrested from her hold, she will be again plunged in the gross darkness of heresy and idolatry, and suffer a long and wearisome conflict. The voice to the *sixth* Church is most important to notice here : "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." But what that hour of temptation will be that is here spoken of, we do not know,—it is in the future, and at the very door. It is immediately added, "Behold, I come quickly : *hold that fast which thou hast*, that no man take thy crown." (Rev. iii. 10, 11.) The precious gem we are here told to hold fast is the truth of Christ. The Reformed Protestant Church is the agent God has appointed to finish His work : she is "the anointed cherub." (Ez. xxviii. 14.) And God has made her so : He has predestinated her to glory and honour. There is now nothing to prevent her from establishing the kingdom of Christ over the whole world ; but without diligence, zeal, action, and earnest

prayer—spiritual travail—with faith in God, and faith in herself as His agent, another in a later day may take her crown. We envy not that mind that cannot appreciate its real greatness.

In the face of God's gracious revelation of this sixth vial, what is the right thing for the Church of Christ to do? What is her duty as His witness, and as a faithful servant? Two things are plain before her. First, to negotiate with the Turks to let the Jews return to Palestine; and secondly, to make a public proclamation of this prophecy that the Jews may so return. First, we are on friendly terms with the Turks,—why not, in a truly loving, Christian spirit, show them that this vial relates to them? that by surrender, a conscientious submission to the will of Providence, an enormous blessing, will accrue to them. Who knows, if by mild treaty they might not be led to receive the truth? "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." But if then they will not let the Jews return, they must be forced to submission: the Christian Church will have kept the word of Christ's patience, and will receive the promise. That is,—kept from the hour of temptation, or the peril of that conflict,—the victory will be hers: the crown hers.

Secondly, all converted Jews, Christians, should be helped to return to their ancient inheritance; but upon this condition only,—that Christ may be exhibited to the world, and glorified in them. By a national manifesto the whole dispersed body should be told that their Messiah has come, and is now standing up for them to deliver them from every place into which they have been driven, and to restore them to Canaan if they will restore Him. If the offer of salvation be thus presented from Him, from His sure Word, with the earnestness of the ancient type of the Christian Church,—“How can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?” (Esth. viii. 6)—I say, if the

great exodus—salvation—of the Jews be thus presented to them, they will receive it. The Christian Church must thus act, be thus up and doing,—following the chain of prophetic history, fulfilling events,—if she would now bring the history of our economy to a close, as it is revealed she may do. She must pray for the sealing of the first-fruits of the Jewish Church as it is revealed at the end of this *sixth* dispensation,—she must believe herself,—she must show the promises to them,—help them to believe, and they will receive it. They must be taught this theory of seven periods: that the sixth vial, the drying up of the Euphrates, relates to them, inasmuch as it is to be an event of Providence for their benefit. That event is now within, or at the end of the next 130 years. And I repeat, I do not know how the desired end is to be attained unless the events are intelligently fulfilled as they are revealed. The believing and the faithful of the Jewish Church were expecting the Messiah when He came. Their hope was from the Word of God: and to them He did come; while to those who rejected Him He only came to condemn and to expel. “O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” (Matt. xiv. 31.) “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. viii. 32.)

Still, I do not know that we are now to expect God to work a miracle in leniency to our indifference or want of faith. The world is not now young: by experience and revelation we do know what is right, and He does expect moral courage, conformity to His Word, and submission to Christ, our Example and our Head. “Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and *ye know* all things.” (1 John ii. 20.) Conscience, the voice of the Spirit, is a faithful monitor, and we are therefore not to seek to evade obedience, knowing we are to obey. If there be a possibility of failure in the great coming crisis, I add, it will not be of God, for “with God all things

are possible," and His love is equal to His power. But let us proceed upon the firm belief that the victory is His, and the end of all things is at hand.

Under the *seventh* Church, the voice is still, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. . . . To him that *overcometh* will I grant to sit with Me in my kingdom, even as *I overcame*, and am set down with my Father in His throne." (Rev. iii. 21.) This is the goal. But what is that goal? what is it to overcome? Each of the seven Churches had its goal. (Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26; iii. 5, 12, 21.) And some in each body attained it, but the many in the race never reached it. Then what is the goal? Is it obedience to the moral law by the force of resolute determination,—that is, acting in our own strength? or is it coming to Christ, casting ourselves at His feet, believing in the efficacy of His blood, and obtaining the life of God the eternal Spirit brought back to us, and brought back to us by that blood, to enable us to obey, to overcome, to act from filial love and fear? Here redemption does not abrogate the law: "Yea, we establish the law;" nor does the law abrogate the Gospel; but we, feeling its Divine extent, the strength of sin by the law, it brings us to Christ. Free will is not so much of works as of receiving the grace and power of God brought home to us by Christ: "If thou knewest *the gift of God*, and who it is that saith to *thee*, Give *Me* to drink; thou wouldest have asked of *Him*, and He would have given *thee* living water." If we put will before grace, we again put the cart before the horse; but if we receive grace, a willing mind will follow. The motions of our will are to do evil, till God in Christ draws us into light, and spiritual union with Himself. (John vi. 65.) When Christ said, "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do His *will*, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John vii. 17), He was not at all speaking of works, or of morals: if my reader will read from the tenth to the thirty-ninth verse, he

will see this. Christ had gone up from Galilee to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles, and we are told, in the midst of the feast, He went up into the temple, and taught. Teaching and preaching were then the subject at issue. As I have often said, no one was ever more conventional than Christ: we find Him at all the Jewish feasts, always teaching on the Sabbath-day. "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. iii. 15) was the example He ever set, and the practice He ever taught. And so when He spake this verse, which many wrest to their own destruction, He did not mean that we must do His will to obtain a knowledge of Himself,—that there must be a conformity to His *will* before we can *know* Him: such heresy would be dangerous in the extreme, for we can never do His will till we do know Him. But He meant, by walking in all the Divine ordinances and means of grace which God had appointed, we should receive the light, instruction, and knowledge which those ordinances were Divinely intended to convey; as when it is written of Zacharias and Elisabeth, "They were walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." Christ was commending the people for coming up to the feast, and to the temple, to hear His teaching: this was within the power of their *will*. Then He met with them, and told them if they believed on Him, they should receive the Holy Ghost with power to do His will, even to minister His Spirit, like rivers of living water. (Verses 38, 39.) This is Divine decree and free will; Christ has predestinated this sixth and the seventh Church to glory: the kingdom, and the power, and the glory are His; but we must be found walking in His commandments and ordinances, conformed to His Word, to receive them. We must first *learn* the letter of the command, and then hang upon His promise, His mercy, and His grace, for power to obey it. Thus acting, the *spirit* will be subjected, self will be controlled, we shall overcome, and sit with Christ in His throne, even as He overcame all the

powers of hell for others, and sat down with His Father on His throne.

After Christ's resurrection, *He did* not reproach His disciples for treachery, for their sinful natures, prone to depart from Him, but He said, "Behold, I send the *promise* of my Father upon you:" the *promise* of the Father was a *promise*, and the *gift* of the Holy Ghost was a *gift*. If we look to ourselves we shall never receive it; to do so, would be to lead us on imperceptibly to the very loss of hope in the mercy of God,—to the relinquishment of asking and of seeking for the power of the Spirit,—to despair; but to look away from ourselves, to Christ, for the *promise*, for the *gift*,—this is the way to obtain help. He did reproach His disciples for want of faith: "O fools, and slow of heart to *believe*;" but not one word about their fallen natures that they inherited from Adam. Lord, increase our faith to receive the *gift*, pour upon us the spirit of grace and of supplication to obtain the *gift*! Fulfil in us Thy promise: "I will pour out my Spirit unto you." (Prov. i. 23.) "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." (Isa. xlv. 3; Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17, 18.)

These digressions arise from this subject of Divine decree, and free will. I am very much inclined to think other passages I have referred to may be explained in the same way. (John xiv. 23.) Christ will meet us in His appointed ordinances, but if we neglect them we peril our souls. But to suppose that any state of mind or will can commend us to God as candidates for the knowledge of Christ, or Divine favour in any way, is heresy; salvation is of free grace, and if there be a willing mind it is grace already begun. Still, we have the free will, to follow up the abstract idea, to continue in the means of grace, and to wait for Christ in them. So His Church may now follow up these events of prophecy, and Christ will work in her in them: the Almighty Power will be His; and the merit of obedience to His will, both hers and His,

for without the motions of His Spirit she cannot obey His call.

Under the *seventh* seal, the paschal anthem of the victorious Church ceases for a moment, while some great action is being fought, some other great victory won. (Rev. viii. 1.)

Under the *seventh* trumpet, the kingdoms of this world are seen to have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He reigns for ever and ever. (Rev. xi. from verse 15.) Under this *seventh* trumpet the great judgment-day is proclaimed as at hand. (Rev. xi. 19.)

The *seventh* vial is seen poured upon the spirit of evil: the empire of Satan falls, as Jericho did under the sounding of the *seventh* trumpet (Josh. vi. 15, 16); and it is written, "It is done." (Rev. xvi. from verse 17.) But I will not leave the chain of history without adding that these conflicts are to a great extent religious ones; the truth of the Gospel of Christ against idolatry, heresy, and sin, is the point at issue, and it is seen to be victorious. *Priests* bearing trumpets of rams' horns compassed Jericho, and before them it fell. "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. xxiv. 14.)

If my reader will turn to the striking words in Daniel, in which these words of our blessed Lord were rooted (Dan. xii. 7), he will see the end of all things at hand, as here.

The proffer of eternal life to all through Christ, was God's purpose in the institution of the Church militant, and thus He has been ever saying to the pagan Church in her multifarious forms, "I gave her space to repent." Salvation, and eternal life through Christ alone, is eternal truth; and in this world His Gospel must be practically what it is really,—a common ground for all,—heathens, pagans, Jews, Turks, outcasts, the poor, the multitudes of the people,—and He will receive

them. May His Church now at the eleventh hour have grace to be a faithful "witness," and valiant in His progressing cause.

This *seventh* vial closes the history of the seven periods of 666 years,—of a period of 4662 years, dating from Abraham.

But I shall still give a further outline of this prophecy, of the chapters as they stand, *according to this theory of seven* periods of 666 years, dating from Abraham, that my reader may catch an outline of the book before we proceed to a more detailed explanation of the matter of it.

The three first verses of the first chapter are a short preface to the whole book, with a Divine benediction upon those who should read, hear, and keep the things written in it.

From the fourth verse, the first chapter is a preface to the seven Churches, with the benediction of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost upon those Churches; and with a revelation of the Alpha and Omega girding them all. Of Christ, our great High Priest in their midst; of His eternity and almighty power. The Divine consecration of John by Christ to prophetic office. A revelation of the duplex nature of the priesthood,—that they are stars, or spiritual rulers, in Christ's right hand: the angels of the seven Churches simply meaning duplex beings.

In the second chapter there are four addresses, written to the first four Churches of the seven in Asia. But Asia has a mystical meaning, and the seven Churches there do represent the seven of the seven periods of 666 years.

In the third chapter are three more addresses, to the last three of the seven, and to the last three of the world's history,—completing a period of 4662 years.

The fourth chapter is a part of the preface to the seven seals. And thus it is that it was written in the language of the Jewish typical economy, and in the record of the consecration of the prophets to Divine office (Isa. vi.; Ezek. i. 10); that the

rather to put us back to sea again than to bring us nearer home. Seven thunders—that is, prophecies—are heard to utter their voices, the things of which might not be written. Some deep, twofold, mystical meaning seems to lie beneath the surface of the first meaning of the chapter: some possibility, but not an absolute decree.

As I have shown in my explanation of the chapter, the case is conditional, while the future lies open to the people of God, to the world, even to the seventh period: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." (Rev. iii. 20.) "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Still, God's voice to John was, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." And we must remember what I have before said, that in the chain of history this chapter lies at the end of this sixth period. This command to prophesy again may relate to the codicils then about to be given; but I am sure the "Thunders" of the fourth verse do not. They may announce a seven day economy beyond our own; but I believe their primary meaning is a possibility of a lengthened conflict, of an extension to seven dispensations of two thousand years, instead of seven periods of 666 years. We may treat lightly the Word of God if we will; but every word has its weight, and is fraught with most definite and important meaning; and we cannot thus trifle with it without peril. But even in this chapter, so indicative of danger, Christ is strikingly revealed "the Mediator" between earth and heaven,—between God and man. His right foot on the sea, and His left foot on the earth, represent Him the connecting link between the two. So that there is now no chasm between the sinner and forgiveness; none between the Church and her great Deliverer, Saviour, God; not a hair's breadth between her and salvation. But in order to spiritual union He must be received, and His Word obeyed. If His Church be thus truly and really in union with Him, by the power of His Spirit He will come and put an end

to this groaning, travailing economy. Would the bare coming of the Lord Jesus make the world one whit better than it is now? If the world be set up in the hearts of the people now, would His coming in His Kingdom dethrone the usurper? No: the world would reject Him as it did before. We must first pray for God the Holy Ghost to descend into the hearts of the people, "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord." I ask, what would the Church like?—for Christ to come now, to be glorified in her, and to exterminate all His enemies, all the shoals of people who know not Him? Is such a desire Christian? No: she must first pray for God the Holy Spirit to come, to sanctify, and to make holy; and then at the end of the seven periods Christ will come to reign. But if we cannot receive God the eternal Spirit by faith now, we certainly could not receive Christ if He came.

The eleventh chapter to the fourteenth verse is a codicil to the three periods of 666 years of this Christian dispensation; dating from the beginning of it; or, according to the exact date given in the second and third verses, from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, to the end of the 1998 years. This eleventh chapter is a codicil to both the seals and trumpets; they representing the same periods. The remainder of the chapter is the page of history under the sounding of the *seventh* trumpet; save the last verse, which is a prophecy of the then approaching Judgment Day.

The twelfth chapter is a codicil to the seals: a further revelation of the power Imperial Rome would exercise against the Church after this prophecy was written; but the chapter dates from the beginning of the Christian era, to the end of the seventh period,—to the year 4662 from Abraham.

The thirteenth chapter is a codicil to the trumpets,—ecclesiastical history, as is the history under them; a further revelation of the Romish beast. This chapter also dates from the beginning of the Christian dispensation; but the history in it

only continues down to the end of the sixth period,—to the year 1998 of this dispensation ; as is evident from the opening scene of the next, the fourteenth chapter : the vision of the first-fruits of the Jewish Church in Canaan ; as in the regular history this is seen under the *sixth* seal, seventh chapter : it dates the period here. And then the chain of history of the *seventh* period is continued in that fourteenth chapter. Thus the number in the last verse of this thirteenth chapter, “Six hundred threescore and six,” relates alike to “the third part” under the trumpets, and to the then short remaining period of the existence of the beast,—the 666 years of the seventh period. The verse is prophetic of his short future, as well as a revelation of his spiritual existence during seven periods of 666 years.

But there is a striking feature in this chapter. The history of the second beast from the 11th verse demands particular attention, and cautious explanation. For a long time I thought this second beast was the Mohammedan Antichrist seen under the fifth trumpet in the ninth chapter ; but after longer study I am convinced I was mistaken. I thought so, because the chapter is a codicil to the trumpets ; but I have said the eleventh chapter is a codicil to the seals and trumpets, and there we find the codicil to that fifth trumpet a further revelation of the false prophet. (Rev. xi. 10.) And so I am now quite convinced that this second beast in the thirteenth chapter is France, and that his two horns do represent France and Spain. They did exercise all the power of Rome before Rome, and forced multitudes to conformity to Rome. By regal and ecclesiastical power they did do great wonders, and poured down the fire of affliction, persecution, cruelty, and of martyrdom from that firmament of power. They did deceive the people, those whose names were not written in the Lamb’s book of life, by those miracles of success and power which they did in the sight of the beast, in the sight of the parent corruption : “The

Mother of Harlots." They did form a corrupt Church like the original, or as it is here expressed, Dan. iii. 1, made an image to the beast; that is, they formed a Church whose image or constitution was of the same nature as the beast,—as of the regal power; who was really the old Pagan idolater, only in another form. "He had power to give life unto the image of the beast,"—to the parent Church, Rome, which was for a moment, as it were, resuscitated by the living and reigning power of France: "That the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Rome was the head of the corruption—the spokesman; and France had only to make the Pope speak, and the thing was done,—the most atrocious barbarities committed: thousands were "killed" who would not conform to Rome, who would not worship that demagogue in her. In the reign of Louis XIV., the seventeenth verse was literally fulfilled; I may say, the whole of this scene enacted: he did prohibit all commerce and all intercourse with those who would not so conform and so worship. His many cruel edicts, and his revocation of the Edict of Nantes, are memorable facts of his reign; I repeat, his whole reign was a wonderful fulfilment of this description of this second beast. And it was also a wonderful antitype of the Pagan reign of Nebuchadnezzar: as the history was in the future, the prophecy of it was rooted in the history of the beast. And thus do we understand why the past, the Jewish dispensation, was written, or made the background of this prophecy, to prefigure the future.

I have said this thirteenth chapter brings us down to the end of the *sixth* period—the one in which we live; and thus it is that the last verse is a prophetic problem, as is the tenth chapter. Will the old spiritual power, the old Pagan, and regal power, the Romish Antichrist, "which had the wound by a sword, and did live,"—will he now fall finally, and for ever,

without a death struggle, without putting forth more energy than ever, during the remaining 130 years of this sixth period, and the 666 years in the seventh period? This is now the prophetic problem at issue. If we think he will thus die a natural death without some new device, some depth of action yet unknown, without one more counterfeit to deceive, without another offspring from the bottomless pit, without such an exercise of power as he has never yet exerted, we are mistaken: he will put forth an energy equal to the crisis, knowing that it is for victory or final defeat. I repeat, if defeat is to be his, and victory to be Christ's, His people must now follow up these events of history as they are revealed under this theory of seven periods of 666 years. If they do not, Rome may again triumph, and the whole scene be again enacted. I have shown the voice under the *fifth* seal—"Rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled" (Rev. vi. 11)—was a reference to, or a prophecy of, the martyr deaths which should take place in this *sixth* period, and which I have shown did take place in France and other countries. It was one of the most melancholy days of the world's history when Henry IV., of France, renounced Protestantism: and what was his reward? To be very soon assassinated, and judged at the bar of God. I shall show, from Rev. xvi. 13, 14, France is one of the three powers that will gather round Jerusalem, perhaps again to take Palestine from the Jews after it shall have been given up to them. "*They are the spirits of devils, working miracles,*" is a reference to Rev. xiii. 14; and in that impiously bold attempt they fall. Let us not forget how near this event is at hand, for it is under the approaching *sixth* vial. I am no theosophist, but simply a teacher of revealed truth.

In the first five verses of the next, the fourteenth chapter, is a vision of the first-fruits of the Jewish Church,—of the same

sealed ones as are seen in the seventh chapter : their number, "an hundred forty and four thousand," identifies them the same. Thus, as I have said, the period in the chain of history is fixed,—the *end* of the period under the *sixth* seal,—the moment now approaching. This chain of history in this fourteenth chapter is continued from the thirteenth chapter. The scene changes and the triumphant Church is seen.

The angel of the sixth and seventh verses is the angel or Church of this *sixth* period,—it may be from the time of the Reformation, from Wickliff to the end of the 666 years. The angel of the eighth verse is particularly the angel with the *sixth* trumpet; distinct only from the history under the seal, as being the ecclesiastical phase of the history : the period is the same. This angel's voice is, "Babylon is fallen : " referring to the subjugation of the Romish beast as seen under the *sixth* trumpet. (Rev. ix. from verse 13.) As I have before shown, the two fields of action in this sixth period were separately revealed : the subjugation of the Romish power by the Protestant Church, under the *sixth* seal (Rev. vi. from verse 12); and by the Mohammedan power, under the *sixth* trumpet, by the territory taken by the Turks. (Rev. ix. from verse 13.)

The angel of Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11, is the angel with the *sixth* vial. He revokes all the edicts of the beast,—those which we have seen so cruelly enacted in the last chapter (13, 15, 16, 17): which power I have shown was France. So that these visions reveal to us the part that power will yet play against the Protestant people, even down to the time of the sixth and seventh vials. (Rev. xvi. 13—17.) This angel of Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11, which I have said is the angel with the sixth vial, the same as in Rev. xvi. 12, 13, not only revokes all the Romish edicts, but, with great authority, proclaims Protestant edicts. And they are most important to notice here, for they are a public manifesto put into the Church's hands by God

Himself, for her to proclaim and to maintain in the approaching last conflicts,—*last*, if the faith once delivered to the saints be strenuously contended for. For, as I have said, the old spiritual enemy, “the man of sin,” is not dead; the Romish Antichrist is not dead. Without vigilance, and without the full exercise of this divine authority, it would be as easy now for England to glide into Rome, as it was for the Christian Church to be submerged from the time of the seventh century. No compromise may be made: the Protestant Church may not be united with Rome, nor may Rome be taken into the Protestant Church. To all who will become pure, genuine Christians, whether Jews or heretics, let her most thankfully and joyfully open her large bosom to receive.

Here is the public manifesto given by God. I must extract it, because it is so important. But before doing so, I would say it may relate more particularly to the period when the beast, the dragon, and the false prophet are seen to ally themselves against the people of God after the pouring out of the *sixth* vial (Rev. xvi. 13), for I have shown the angel with this manifesto is the angel with that vial. “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that *keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.*” The Gospel of Christ increases our obligation to keep the moral law a thousandfold; the daily struggle of a genuine believer is to keep that law, and not to evade it: but I do not think “The commandments of God,” as here spoken of, refer directly

to the ten commandments of the moral law, but to the general observance of all God's ordinances, and to Divine constitutions as revealed in this book. I believe we think too little of conformity and obedience to these: "*Blessed* are they that keep those things which are written therein." I believe there is an incalculable blessing in obedience to all Divine institutions,—to the Word; I have shown before, this was Christ's meaning when He said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." And this is the meaning here of the first part of the verse: "Here is the patience of the saints." It is beautiful to see believers walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; in faith, and patience, and amidst persecutions, trials, and much discouragement; in doing so God will certainly meet with them, and they must as certainly meet with God. And thus I think there is more included in this Christian revocation, in this manifesto of the angel with the *sixth* vial, than merely that of not receiving the name of the Romish beast, and not worshipping him; the voice gives us a beautiful insight into the attainments and increasing glory of the Church of Christ. The eighteenth chapter is a codicil to this sixth vial, and it enlightens us further in what will be included in the downfall of the towers of Babylon. In how many forms may we not worship the spiritual usurper? While we are careful we do not come in contact with the known enemy, let us also be careful that we are not deceived by him in a more disguised form still.

The thirteenth verse of this fourteenth chapter proclaims the time of the resurrection of the dead at the very door, and that the works of those who are faithful will quickly follow them. The verse is a prophecy, as we have seen omens and prophecies at the end of each history throughout this book.

In the fourteenth verse "the Son of man" is seen coming in clouds of faithful servants to engage in the conflicts of the seventh period ; His spiritual presence is signified : and it is for this we should pray, it is for this genuine faith will pray. Christ in the Church, as He is revealed in Rev. xix. 11—13, explains this verse, which is also a prophecy lying between the sixth and seventh periods. His army is here increased, and the golden crown upon His head proclaims that He shall be the victor, as He is seen to be under the seventh trumpet (Rev. xi. 15).

The angel of the fifteenth and sixteenth verses is the angel under the *seventh seal* : he calls to Christ to thrust in His sickle, for the time of the harvest is come. Referring to Matt. xxiv. 30, 31.

The angel of the seventeenth verse is the angel with the *seventh trumpet*, and he has in his hand the sickle of the Lord's reaper.

The angel of the remaining verses is the angel with the *seventh vial*, and his commission is to gather the corrupt vine of the earth, and to cast it into the winepress of the wrath of God. But these last conflicts are more fully revealed still in the codicils given after the pouring out of the vials (Rev. xix.) ; there "the Word" is seen the Warrior and the Conqueror.

The fifteenth chapter is a preface to the seven vials ; but the second, third, and fourth verses are a song of thanksgiving and of praise for the victories under the seals and trumpets, already recorded. It is rooted in the song of Moses after the victory of the Israelites over Pharaoh and his host. It is the paschal hymn (Matt. xxvi. 30), and hence called "the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb."

In the sixteenth chapter is the pouring out of the seven vials, a vial at the end of each one of the periods of 666 years. As I have before said, the first was the destruction of all the

Canaanitish nations—"of the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites,"—as God had said to His people "seven nations, greater and mightier than thou." (Deut. vii. 1.) The book of Joshua upon this subject is one of the most sublime and grand histories of the world, sacred or profane.

The second vial was the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the captivity of the holy people; the history of which is one of the most awful of Revelation.

The third was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; the account of which by Josephus is appalling.

The fourth was poured upon Imperial Rome: the name became blotted out.

The fifth vial was poured on Rome,—on the seal of the Romish beast.

The sixth will be poured on the Euphrates,—the great Mohamedan power. But here let me direct the attention of my reader once more to the striking notification under this vial, to the Satanic attempt to take again territory lost: "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Our translators have added, "*come* out of the mouth," but the word is not in the original, and it alters the case entirely, for these three powers are offsprings of the parent stock, but do not come out of the mouth after the time of this sixth vial, but they had so issued in some past period. And this reading of the passage immediately points to France, to some regal power—it may be Russia, or the Imperial power of France—and to some remnant of the people of the

false prophet. I think God will suffer them to encamp about Jerusalem and destroy them there.

The victory under the *seventh* trumpet is an interlying page of history between this sixth and the seventh vial (Rev. xi. 15); and then the vial is poured upon the Spirit of Evil.

The seventeenth chapter is a codicil to the fifth and sixth trumpet: a vision of the corrupt woman, the Church of Rome, in her hey-day splendour; and of her judgment under the sixth seal, and sixth trumpet.

The eighteenth chapter is a codicil to the sixth vial,—to the drying up of the Euphrates; but much relating to Rome is included in it; and also of the Babylon of ourselves. I am willing to admit that the merchandise and illicit intercourse so reprobated in this chapter, and seen to be consumed by judgment because of its foul corruption, may first, and particularly, mean the vile traffic of Rome that ultimately caused her downfall: her sale of indulgences,—buying souls out of purgatory as a means of enriching herself; to her blasphemy,—of absolving from sin for gain; to her illicit appropriation of lands and goods to increase the revenues of the Church for her own glorification and adornment in every sort of external splendour. But I repeat, there is more than all this in this chapter; there is the spiritual fornication of another body with her, and much corruption that will be consumed in judgment with her. “Come out of her, *my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Oh, that this voice of our heavenly Parent, of our Saviour and our God, might sink into the heart of those whom He so graciously and lovingly calls, “My people!”

In the nineteenth chapter to the tenth verse is the celebration of the Christian passover after the victories over the Romish and the Mohammedan beast, or other antichristian powers, under the sixth vial. The festival is kept both by the Gentile

Christian Church and by the now Jewish Christian Church in Canaan. See the type. (Jos. v. 10, 11.) From the eleventh to the sixteenth verse is a codicil to the *seventh trumpet*: in the one, the kingdoms of this world are seen to have become Christ's (Rev. xi. 15); and in the other, He is seen to be the King of kings and Lord of lords. From the seventeenth verse is a codicil to the *seventh vial*; in which last great conflict the beast and the false prophet are taken, and both cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

In the twentieth chapter the old *regal* enemy is seen cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years: when the first resurrection takes place, and the Millennial reign with Christ during those thousand years. After which the old regal usurper is let loose, to test the loyalty of the saints of the holy city to the King of glory; and when this is evidenced, he is cast into the lake where the beast and the false prophet had been before cast. Then is the great Judgment day, as it had been prophesied of under the *seventh trumpet* (Rev. xi. 19), when the wicked are judged and sentenced according to their works; and those whose names are found in the Lamb's book of life are eternally glorified.

In the twenty-first chapter to the eighth verse is a vision of a new heaven and a new earth,—of a dispensation of the Spirit: "Behold, I make *all things* new. . . . I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." We have only this glimpse of this economy, and therefore we do not know how glorious it will be; but, as I have shown before, it is almost certain God the Spirit will be manifested, as God the Creator and God the Redeemer has been manifested; and, *if possible*, in a more triumphant, almighty, and glorious form.

From the ninth verse is a vision of the eternal city, and of the eternal glory of the saved.

The first five verses of the twenty-second chapter are a part

of the description of that eternal city ; and the remainder of the chapter is a voice to the Church of Christ, as existing when this prophecy was written, and to those who should afterwards attempt to interpret it. Thus is the voice in this chapter addressed to all ages.

Thus closes this sublime book of the Revelation ; and as we behold the prophecy in all its detail, we do see in it the almighty, omniscient, and omnipresent God, a kind and tender and watchful Parent, guiding His people by a right way to a city of habitation. According to this theory the prophecy is now almost fulfilled ; and, as we read history in it and by it, the precisely same detail of events is most striking. Well might unbelievers, and the enemies of God's people, say the book of Isaiah was written after Christ came. "I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." And now, if we do not believe, we must be infidels indeed. And surely the fulfilment of the past should be to us an incentive to follow up vigorously the events that remain. The three most conspicuously revealed are the drying up of the Euphrates, the sixth vial ; the great victory under the *seventh* trumpet (Rev. xi. 15) ; and the great final and decisive battle under the *seventh* vial. (Rev. xvi. 17.)

It now only remains to inquire, How can this great salvation be brought about ? How can the regeneration that remains to be wrought, the work that remains to be done, be done in so short a time ? "*With man this is impossible ; but with God all things are possible.*" Christ must come : the Holy Ghost must be given. The body of Christ's Church—every member of it, every sect of it—must be united : they must try to strengthen, and not to weaken, each other. His cause, and the glory of His name, must be the rallying-point for all : self must be forgotten, lost, in the pursuit of victory. All alike must be humble, holy, loving, and "in honour preferring one another."

And all must unite in spiritual travail to bring "the gift of God" from above,—to bring down Christ to dwell and to reign in His people as He has never yet done; for, I repeat, by Him alone can the mighty work be done. We know it must be done before it can be proclaimed, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ." Action, faith, and supplication,—deep, real spiritual travail,—must go hand in hand. Charity, love Divine, was a Pentecostal gift; and for that gift we must pray.

Great changes, political revolutions, are at all times most perilous. Sudden disseveration of Church and State,—the putting down of a Monarchical government,—would be most dangerous, and bring about a state of misrule, anarchy, and confusion,—a reign of terror no one can foresee the consequence of, unless the time had come to proclaim a Divine Government,—openly and for ever to proclaim Christ our King. There can be no doubt but a Commonwealth is the right state,—the *scriptural one*; but the question is, Is the Church strong enough to take her position? Is she valiant enough in the cause of truth now, to proclaim Christ the Lord of lords, and King of kings? This is the public position she will attain to (Rev. xix. 16); but till she can feel her way to decision and safety, by carrying the multitudes along with her, subjected to the reign of Christ, she must go in leading-strings, be governed by the reign of human power. But should the crisis arrive for the Church to be separated from the State, she must proclaim herself Divine: Christ her head, God her life, her strength, her glory. She must then "Lay hold on eternal life." If we believe in the Fatherhood of God for ourselves, we must believe in it for the shoals and multitudes of the people. These must be brought into the resurrection-life of the Gospel; into the fold of Christ; out of the depths of darkness, vice, ignorance, want, and misery, into the garden of the Lord. The Gospel

must be practically what it is really: light, life, help, and peace to all.

"Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that *my house* may be filled." There is no want of accommodation there; there is no want of provision there. "I appoint unto you a kingdom. . . . That ye may eat and drink at *my table* in my kingdom." There is spiritual provision there, that the rich and the great know nothing of,—spiritual provision enough for all. The records of the multitudes miraculously fed should be read here. (Matt. xiv. 20; xv. 34—36; xvi. 8—10.)

Then, instead of pulling down the bulwarks of the nation before the inner life is ready for the fall, we should rather pray that our rulers may all become spiritual men,—wise men: a united body,—unity is strength,—united to discuss calmly, in the Spirit of Christ, the momentous affairs of the Church and of the nation. Instead of indulging in passion and party spirit, which only end in distancing the people of God from God, we should pray that the inner life may outgrow the strife; the externals that for a season protect it, but trammel it. We should pray that the inner life may subjugate even principalities and powers in high places. By spiritual travail we should bring about a voluntary system: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual," etc. "The power of God was present to heal them." We should pray that riches, pomp, regality, all temporal, superfluous splendour may be laid at Christ's feet. If the wealth of this great kingdom were laid at His feet, what might not be done? This gift of charity we must pray for, and each one try to exercise. "All that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need." (Acts ii.) This Pentecostal gift would bring down more serene satisfaction, more of heaven into our hearts,

than any other grace of the Spirit, than any other fruit of the Spirit, faith excepted. Such obedience as this, such conformity to the Word as this, would bring down more of the Kingdom of God into our midst, and insure more success in evangelizing the world than any other gift of the Spirit. "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

I believe a public proclamation of a Divine Government, of the Divinity of the Scriptures, and of ourselves "A peculiar people," would inspire an awe and respect that nothing else could. It is said that when the Grecian Army, with Alexander at its head, met a large force of the national body of the Jews with the high priest in its front, Alexander dismounted from his charger, and prostrated himself before the servant of the Most High God. And so it would be now if we were true to God, and to ourselves as called of Him to do His work.

A scaffolding is necessary in the building of a house, and it may not be taken down till the house is near enough to its completion to do without it. The State is to the Church what the scaffolding is to a house, and it may not be ruthlessly taken down till the Church be near enough to its completion to do without it. But the end of all things is the Church of Christ.

Every man might not be able to sit under his own vine and his own fig-tree without a Christian Government; but its suffrages and immunities should be extended to all, that all alike might love and honour the civil arm that protects them. I say protects, for the State is to the Church what the outer coat is to the chrysalis—protection. If the Church had more spiritual life, if she knew her future, she would soon learn to discard the superficial,—to change her human form for the Divine. What nature does for the chrysalis, grace must do for the Church; and then she will soar away into the light of heaven as she is revealed in this book of the Revelation: "I

am the Resurrection and the life," is alike written upon both. To force nature would be destructive of life ; and to act without grace would be perfect weakness, and drift the Church upon a perilous and unknown shore. I say, the true Church by spiritual power must induce a voluntary system. God says, "My grace is sufficient for thee : for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Of the eternal city it is written, "She had no *need* of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it : " that is, no *need* of States, civil and ecclesiastical. But this tells us that here there is a *need* ; and we must go forward by all the strength that can be brought to bear, till we are brought into the effulgence of the light of God and of the Lamb. When the populace can be brought to the feet of God in Christ, the secular arm will not be *needed*.

We have an enormous ecclesiastical system, and we do rejoice that our cathedrals that were once Romish are now Protestant ; that our Government is Christian, and our throne Christian ; but we must think less of the might and of the power, and pray more earnestly for the Spirit.

Let my reader read Psalm lxxii. It is a magnificent Psalm : grand upon the subject of a Divine government. David wrote it relatively to his son Solomon, when he was made king. But we must remember the Jewish economy was a typical one, and that David and Solomon were of that economy. Aaron, the high priest was a *type* of Christ,—of Christ's eternal priesthood (Heb. vii. 16) : "Who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." It is this *endless life* we must seek after, and extol, and think less of the carnal ordinances. Moses and Joshua were types of Christ, who is the spiritual "leader and commander" of the people. (Isa. lv. 4.) And so David and Solomon were *types* of Christ, "The King of kings, and Lord of lords." And hence this magnificent Psalm : "He shall come down like rain upon the

mown grass : as showers that water the earth. . . . He shall have dominion also from sea to sea. . . . He shall deliver the needy when he crieth ; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. . . . He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence ; and precious shall their blood be in His sight." And then here is the reference to Christ as the blessing and substance of the covenant : the typical age was the covenant age. "His name shall endure for ever : His name shall be continued as long as the sun : *and men shall be blessed in Him* : all nations shall call Him blessed. . . . Let the whole earth be filled with His glory ; Amen, and amen." I cannot even touch this subject of the spiritual reign of Christ as it is revealed from the beginning of the Bible to the end ; suffice it to say if we go back to the typical economy we lose the substance and entirely render nugatory Christ's coming. Samuel was a ruler of God's own choosing, and when God said to him, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me," He did complain that His government and His will were not submitted to. The sins of David, and the defection of Solomon, show us how perilous it is to exalt temporal above spiritual power. The book of Ecclesiastes tells us how perilous also it is to the soul. From no other point can we understand many of the King's strange sayings. God said to Samuel, "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee" (1 Sam. viii. 7, 18) ; but in judgment He remembered mercy, for He mingled salvation in the cup of their corruption. Solomon in the temple was an eminent type of Christ (2 Chron. vi.), but in his alliance with idolaters he was not a type of Him. (Psalm cxxii. 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, should be read here, with 2 Chron. vi. 14—16.)

"The Queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it ; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon ;

and, behold a greater than Solomon is here." (Matt. xii. 42 ; Luke xi. 32.)

And so I believe if the Divine government were now proclaimed the Church of Christ would start to her feet, and be the conquering heroine of the world: with Him—her Head, her Husband, her Leader, her Shepherd, her King, her God—she could not fail; He would effectually preserve her from swerving to Rome, without the secular arm, fire, or sword. "The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." (Isa. xxiv. 23.) No one doubts the right of a National Church for Christ to reign in: "Ye are a holy nation." The regal element in the Divine is what is incongruous,—the glory of the world obscuring the power and the glory of God.

The element of Christ's kingdom is God's own nature—love; His own attributes are the essential nature of its constitution—beneficence, justice, and peacefulness. To assuage sorrow, to heal the wound of affliction, and to forgive sins are the acts of His reign. Let my reader read that 72nd Psalm again, to see what the elements of His reign really are—the 4th, 12th, 13th, 14th verses.

We must learn the meaning of His words, "Now is my kingdom not from hence:" not from without, not from pomp or power, but from the Divine nature within,—from the heart of Divine love, that would have established an universal brotherhood, and knew no lower standard. Nor was His an utopian theory: He practised what He taught; although He was crucified for maintaining the purity of His reign, of His kingdom. Then we must look to His obedience unto death for justification, and ask for the coming of His good Spirit to restore all things in virtue of His own obedience, and not hope to merit His advent by conforming to His example. But after such love and

obedience as that of His own, it well becomes us also to stoop to conquer. He never loitered in His course, He never rested till He reached the goal—the cross, the crown. But although the victory was His own, He left behind “the mark for the prize of the high calling” for others: “Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be my disciple.” (Luke xiv. 27, 33.) “Go thou and preach the kingdom of God.” (Luke ix. 60.) The kingdom of God and the true Church of Christ are synonymous terms: and the masses must be gathered in, the homes of the poor must be bettered, the wealth of this great kingdom must be brought to meet the emergency. “The Spirit of Christ” is all that is wanted to work the miracle. In order to accomplish it, Christ must be lifted up before the people: before rich and poor alike; He must be made the one central object of the world. The grand compendium of Divine truth contained in John iii., from the 14th to the 18th verse, must be taught and received in its completeness. The floodgates of the Gospel must be opened, the truth of Christ must be forced upon their attention. How beautiful is the thought, that amidst all earth’s changes, that amidst all the wreck and ruin and havoc that Satan has wrought, God *in* Christ is our Father still, our God still! Oh, I say, it is a stupendous truth! The relationship stands in Christ, and not in ourselves, and he is safe who can lay hold of the fact: earth may rock and rend and quake and fear, but there is safety there, and nowhere else but there. And therefore, while I teach Divine decree, and free will, or obedience the work of the Spirit of God, the result of and wrought in virtue of the work of Christ, still I am really of higher doctrinal belief still; for if we are ever saved, if God cut short this groaning conflict, if Christ come in His second advent now, it must be by grace,—by sovereign grace alone. Still, this high, absolute doctrine

does in no way affect the truth : "My sheep know my voice, and they *follow Me.*"

Why should there not be a national proclamation made throughout the world, that the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ is the religion of Heaven, and that there is no other name whereby we can be saved ? The age we live in is one of expeditions, commissions, and explorations, of commercial enterprise. We read of enormous funds raised for the purpose of war, of great funds for exploring the Holy Land, the sites of ancient cities, to confirm, we are told, the truths of Revelation. "Why seek ye the living among the dead ?" We should rather seek a sign from our risen and ascended Lord,—even the token of the gift of His own Spirit ; and who knows but He might give such a Pentecostal effusion as should consecrate the world to His glory ? If we *acknowledge* Him to be our Father and our God, our ascended Saviour and our King, He will acknowledge us to be His creatures, His subjects, His children. Would not a public, authoritative, national commission of the Gospel,—of the plain, pure doctrines of the Gospel,—with the power of God to give them efficacy, be more profitable to the world than any other commission whatever ? Would not public money be thus better spent, and return better interest ?

Everything around us, and about us, is now saying, "*Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.*" What if this day of salvation should evade our grasp ? What if Satan should beguile us with the farm, the wife, and the merchandise ; with dissensions, party spirit, and sin, till it is past ? And we should have to write, as did former ages, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." We have steam, coal, science, and enormous manual power to plough continents and oceans : we are not economists of these ; but what if they should come to an end ? As I look into the storehouse of the earth, I often think how provident God has been for us, and

dent we are for others ; how the tender mercies of
t against our reckless self-indulgence and extrava-
at if coal should be exhausted, and steam come to
ht not the work of the propagation of the Gospel
d, we know not how long? Might not the dark
earth remain ages upon ages in heathen darkness?
sirable that this economy should come to an end?
creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together

When we think of miners of coal, and of every
he earth, who spend their lives—short ones indeed
ump, dark, cold caverns of the earth ; when we
awful state of the masses of the poor ; of sin as it
ry form upon the earth ; of the toil and hardships
the working classes ; of the despotism of heathen
of the sufferings of the weak and helpless through-
d,—I ask again, Is it not most desirable that this
ould should come to an end? Oh, what an un-
ing would it be ! “ A new heaven and a new earth ! ”
n the possibility that this may now be,—that God is
nd His grace in Christ infinite and free ; but I have
without growing conformity to the Word, without
these events of prophecy, the day of conflict may
l, and all the horrors of the past be again enacted.
l to each individual is said to the world : “ Believe
Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” The eye
st be kept steadfastly on Him ; we must unitedly
His coming : and if we are faithful to maintain the
purity against Rome, against all heresy, I think we
some supernatural gift of the Spirit. “ Come out
them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord. . . . *And*
: *you*, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall
and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty.”
7.)

st let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” “ She came

and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me." This should be our urgent petition, our position ; and if it be, we may expect help. Christ said, " Without Me, ye can do nothing." Having directed faith, He will not disappoint it. Christ is our Mediator and Intercessor, of whom all priests and mediators were but types ; and I do not hesitate to say that His coming, and the consummation of His kingdom upon earth being entirely of grace, He will come now to those who will receive Him. We are a redeemed people, an elected people : and I believe His coming to His true people now, at the end of seven periods of 666 years, was decreed and registered in Heaven in a past eternity, and that He will so come ; but whether to finish the conflict, must, I think, to some extent remain with those to whom He comes. He offers the power to obtain victory ; but will it be received and used faithfully ? "*He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment ; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.*" (Rev. iii. 5.) " He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Here is Divine decree, and free will. But we read again, "*They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb*" (Rev. xii. 11) ; this is a reference to the eight goals of this book, "*He that overcometh*" (Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26 ; iii. 5, 12, 21) ; the *seven* are to the *seven* Churches : each one may succeed, or fail, be the victor, or be defeated ; the eighth is to the whole. If we ever overcome, it must be by the blood of the Lamb, by the truth of Christ ; He only can lead us on to victory : this is my experience and testimony, and shall be to my dying day. But we may miss the goal by not having faith in the fact,—by coming short of the obedience that faith will work. " Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure : " that is, act courageously, intelligently, with moral courage ; for it is God who was the author of salvation, and He will be the finisher of it. We should have no power to work at all if God had not at

first wrought salvation, and then given us His Spirit to work also : whichever way we turn, the work is all of grace, of God. Our unfaithfulness does not alter His unchanging love ; but it does incur chastisement. God is our Father *in* Christ, our God *in* Christ ; the relationship does not stand in ourselves, but in Him : sin has nothing to do with it. We are His people, and subject to all that He is heir to. Faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and obedience is the fruit of faith. A mother may forget her sucking child, but God says, if we are His by the covenant of His Son, He cannot forget us. Here I leave my people, with spiritual deliverance and salvation full in view, and as certain as they are God's people : "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive, and ye shall have." "Behold, I come quickly : *hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*" But in the visible body, the Church, there may be a large mass of people who are not God's people. If any are now not saved, because they are acting contrary to the light of conscience, because they will not walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, in which they would meet with God, He may arrest them by judgment : but why should they provoke judgment ? Even to corrupt Rome He said, and is still saying, "I gave her space to repent."

God, by Providence, will vindicate His holiness. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." "The Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God." But this does not shake the foundation of our salvation ; but only reveals to us a doctrine more consolatory than that of Redemption itself—if this were possible,—that whoever God calls and justifies, them He also sanctifies and glorifies. But this work is progressive ; the grace of God in it seems even more persisting and more wonderful than in Redemption : His patience, repose, and love are indeed herein infinite.

In this last prophecy God has defined definitely the seven periods of time, that we may follow the chain of events, and not miss the goal of salvation now. He has not only led us on step by step hitherto, but He has explained definitely the conflicts that remain, that His people may be able to meet them, to go on unto the end, to maintain the truth unto the end. He has given to them many victories in the past,—the victory over the Spanish Armada, at the battle of Trafalgar, the battle of the Nile, and of the Boyne, of Waterloo, and many others. The victories under Cromwell did more to make England great and feared than almost anything else; not that anything can justify such deeds of blood—swords must be beaten into ploughshares,—the din of war must be lost in the sound of the Gospel; but England is the divinely appointed agent to bring the world within the pale of the Church of Christ. And if she goes on, submits to His Word and to His reign, He will show to the world now that He only is “Invincible,” that all other armaments must be scattered to the winds of heaven,—that He only is God.

But, on the other hand, I know that the Israelites were driven back into the wilderness when on the very borders of the promised land; and that Moses, the most mighty servant of the Lord, beheld its broad extent from Pisgah’s glorious height, but was not permitted to enter there. But perhaps it will be said, These were cases under the law, to show us what our shortcoming of heaven must have been without the Gospel. Yes, but under the Gospel I read also, “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?” But I will not leave even this double sentence of condemnation without the truth of the Gospel of Christ meeting it, overreaching it:

"When we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. . . . While we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Rom. v.) God through Christ can command deliverance and salvation; and we have no hope any where else, even for deliverance from our sinful selves.

There is not now a hair's breadth between sin and forgiveness, between the sinner, and the Saviour, if he can receive Him.

When the time had come for the Children of Israel to enter Canaan, nothing could arrest the progress of the arms of Joshua: "Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. *Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.*" (Jos. iii. 10, 11.) That ark was a type of Christ; and so now, if He, the Captain of the Lord's host, goes before, the victory will be the Lord's and His people's.

"Be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

"What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart." (Deut. xx. 4, 8.)

"Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

I will insert here one of the most crystal, one of the most massive and solid, stepping stones to salvation that was ever

laid: more enduring than granite, and more lucid than the diamond. "Seventy weeks are determined upon the people and upon thy holy city, *to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.*" (Dan. ix. 24.) Christ did do all this. Mark the fulness of the language, the completeness of the salvation, wrought for body and soul, for time and for eternity. He finished *the* transgression, the blot upon humanity, —eradicating it, did away with it: that which had been there so long and had been so deep. "And to make an end of sins:" Virtually Christ did do this; so that if the world had received Him, it would then have been saved: but it did not. "And to make reconciliation for iniquity:" the Creator was reconciled to His creatures, the Father to the child, and the God to man. "And to bring in everlasting righteousness:" Christ did do this: we are justified by faith in Him, by laying hold of the life that is in Him. He came: there was no default in Him. But did the world do this when He came? Did His own people do this? No: "Israel which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. . . . For they stumbled at that stumblingstone." Yes: even at that transparent stone they stumbled. And so now Christ comes in grace, in love, in power; but few receive Him. On this doctrinal ground only do I teach Divine decree, and free will. Obedience is the fruit of faith, of which Christ was the original Author: "Speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water." (Num. xx.)

It was as much the will of God—Divine decree—that the world should be saved in the period, the 666 years, in which Christ came (that is, in the first 666 years of this dispensation), as it is His decree that it shall be saved in any seven periods. In the prophecy I have extracted from Daniel ix. 24, what more was there wanting, what more remained to be done?

Christ did come and fulfil it, and the world then might have been saved. The type of seven was instituted in the seven days of creation. Again, in Eden, in the institution of the Sabbath : or, suffice it to say, it was an *antediluvian* institution. (Gen. ii. 2, 3 ; vii. 2—4, 10, 12 ; Jude xiv.) See the most striking language upon *this subject* to the end of the chapter : I cannot extract the whole of it here ; but it is to the point, and, I repeat, most striking. “ Enoch also, the *seventh* from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints.*” I say this referred to the Lord’s final coming in the seventh period ; but the world was not ready to receive Him. Noah was a type of Christ, and the seven souls with him in the ark were types of the people of the seven periods. And we may not forget the three types sent out from the ark : “ The dove found no rest for the sole of her foot. And he stayed other *seven* days. And he stayed yet other *seven* days.” (Gen. viii. 7, 12.) And so, I repeat, the type of seven was an *antediluvian* institution, and revealed seven periods of 666 years, dating from Adam to the end of the seventh period, as much as any other seven periods were revealed. The fact that the Church then missed the goal was not of God ; and if she again misses it, it will not be of Him.

Divine decree concerning seven periods is of Revelation, and cannot be confuted ; as is proved from the fact that not a single refutation has ever been brought against it since the first volume of this work was published, eight years ago, although there are those, and not a few, whose one object has been its suppression.

I repeat again, It was the will of God that the world should be saved in the first seven periods of 666 years of the world’s history, dating from Adam down to the end of the first 666 years of the Christian era, or down to the year 4662 of the world’s history, as much as it was His will that it should be

saved in any other *seven* periods ; although the Sabbath, and all other antediluvian typical *sevens*, were indefinitely types of *seven* periods, shorter or longer, as the case might be. Our Saviour's words were most striking, encouraging to His Church to seize the goal then. "Say not ye, There are yet *four* months, and then cometh harvest?" These four months were a foreshadow of four more periods of 666 years. "Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields ; for they are white already to harvest." (John iv. 35, 36.)

That goal, having been missed, it was and it is now the will of God that the world shall be saved in the seventh period of 666 years, dating from the calling of Abraham down to the end of the first period of 666 years of the *fourth* dispensation of 2000 years of the world's history. Three periods of 666 years in the Jewish dispensation, three of the same periods in the Christian dispensation, and one of the same period in the next, the *fourth* dispensation, according to the theory of this volume ; leaving now 130 years of this *third* dispensation, and 796 years to the end of the seventh period. This theory is rooted in Dan. iv. 16, 23, 25, 32 ; Rev. xiii. 18, and also in all other types of seven in the Old and New Testament. But the most remarkable voice relatively to the increased conflict is in this book of the Revelation. Under the *fourth* trumpet, or at the *end of the seventh* period, dating from Adam, *three* more "woes" are proclaimed, removing the date relatively to the seven periods from Adam to Abraham. These *three* "woes" are three *new* conflicts proclaimed, as I have said at the end of the history under the *fourth* trumpet. (Rev. viii. 13.) The words of St. Jude are beautifully applicable to us also of these closing seven periods : "Ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, *looking for the mercy* of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life."

If this goal be also missed, all the horrors of the *fifth* period under the last theory will be enacted over again, and the seven periods extended to seven dispensations of 2000 years, by the "seven times," or dispensations, being again subdivided into periods of 666 years. This theory is also rooted in Dan. iv. 16, 23, 25, 32; Rev. xiii. 18. And what is very remarkable, that just as three "woes" are prophesied of under the fourth trumpet, at the end of the history in the seventh period, dating from Adam, so seven *new* periods are proclaimed under the *sixth* trumpet, at the end of the history in the *sixth* period, dating from Abraham,—at the end of this sixth period in which we live. (Rev. x.) Here Christ Himself, the very God in covenant with His people through the Mediator Man His anointed one (Rev. x. 1), cries with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth; and when He cries seven thunders utter their voices, the matter of which might not be written; but it was to lie encased in a two-fold form. Let my reader again turn to the chapter: it does proclaim the possibility of a prolonged conflict, as I have said, just as three new conflicts are proclaimed under the *fourth* trumpet. I repeat, Just as the Church missed the goal of final salvation at the end of the first seven periods, in the seventh, in which Christ came, so now she may again miss it in the seventh, dating from Abraham. And I believe this is the meaning of the malediction in the end of this prophecy. (Rev. xxii. 18, 19.) One theory or interpretation might not be given without the other,—nothing might be added, nor might anything be taken away.

As Enoch, the representative of the first seven periods, prophesied of the coming of Christ, so Peter, the representative of the Christian Church, did also. His words upon the subject are not less striking, less cautioning, nor less encouraging. (2 Peter iii.) This chapter should be carefully read here, with that of St. Jude, as I cannot in this work open up all the

possibilities and uncertainties they imply. "Seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless. . . . Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

I do maintain that the spiritual adversary, "The angel of the bottomless pit," will yet put forth a power and a depth of fraud equal to the crisis; and without a knowledge of those depths, and without vigilance, it would be as easy now for the Church again to glide into Rome, or into any other novelty, as it was at the end of those first seven decreed periods.

If it had not been for the late change in political affairs, would not a College have been endowed for the education of Roman Catholics? A more monstrous proceeding still than the Maynooth Grant.

This volume is only an outline of this theory of seven periods of 666 years. With this only have we now to do. No interpretation relatively to the seven dating from Adam to Christ could now be of any service. And the theory of my last volume is the third interpretation, seven dispensations of two thousand years: this I do in no way revoke. This prophecy does admit of the two interpretations, and ancient prophecy of the third. God as much sent me to write one volume as the other. That I have written them at all by His Spirit's teaching is an evidence that He would that the world should now be saved, even according to this theory of seven periods of 666 years; but in order to this the events of history must be followed up, fulfilled. I say the fact that He has thus definitely defined the events is a proof that He would have them now fulfilled, and the world saved.

This volume was only intended to be a simple transposition of the mystical number seven, from seven dispensations of 2,000 years to seven periods of 666 years. And it was my intention that it should follow immediately the publication of

the last volume ; and it would have done so,—that is have been published five or six months ago, but the delay has been with the publisher. Could I have foreseen it, a more careful outline of the theory would have been written in the time ; but as it is I leave it to the public for future writers to fill up events of history according to this theory, for it is a true one.

In the first seventh period the Lord did come “with ten thousands of His saints,” as Enoch said He would ; but the world sunk again into darkness. And so in the second seventh period He will come in some glorious form, but whether to gather in His elect before greater tribulations, or in His final victory, I do not know. In either case that day will be a day of salvation to those who love Him, and a day of judgment to His enemies.

My only desire is to deduce truth, and to be faithful at all costs. I am willing to bear odium and ridicule, only desiring that the weak instrument may be entirely lost sight of in the cause of Christ. My humble and unceasing prayer is that He will give me souls,—a crown of souls. I have seen light and life spring up wherever this work has come ; and if I had only the reward of the good it has already done,—of the souls that have been saved from increased exertion, my reward would not be small. Still, let it not be thought that I think myself better than other people in writing these things. No : the only fact that I maintain is that I have received Christ, and thus He controls my will to do His will. Tell me I am the worst of all God’s creatures ; but, oh, do not tell me that He is not my Saviour, my Redeemer, my Restorer, my Father, and my God still ! I say, do not rob me of this truth, nor hide the grandeur of it from my view.

There is necessarily a good deal in this volume that was in the last, but there is a very great deal in it that was not there ;

and therefore I request all into whose hands it falls to read it through.

I again leave the work with the great Head of the Church, with His mediatorial blood upon it; for under no other shelter should I venture to present it to Him: only adding on the subject of Divine Decree, and Free Will, "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." (James iv.)

"The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God." (Heb. vii. 16—19.)

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 11.)

But, once again, and should this be my last testimony, it shall be of Him. "Jesus Christ" is "the beginning and the end," the "Author and Finisher of our faith." He is the goal I set before my people: "And I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may *win Christ*, and be found *in Him*, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Phil. iii.) I will not distrust my Father and my God. What He has done for me each year of my life of His own free Sovereign grace, makes me bold to ask of Him great things for this year also, and each year, year by year, to the end of my life.

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after," knowing that the past is a guarantee for the future. God is Almighty, and His love, wisdom, and power in Christ are infinite. And so for all, the world is the weight to be laid aside: "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith." The flesh is to be brought into

subjection, and the devil is to be overcome. Unbelief is the secret besetting sin to be openly brought forth and to be slaughtered before the world. In this Christian course we are all runners, "Fellow-helpers to the truth;" and therefore I leave the goal full in view, "Looking unto Jesus," our example, and our salvation. But some one has said, what is quite true, "His example to us is greater condemnation than the law."

Then instead of giving this volume the title of Divine Decree, and Free Will, I ought rather to give it the title of SALVATION. Salvation in and through Christ is the only goal. "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." Let the Church as His agent, as His angel of mercy, take this name, Salvation; teach and preach the elements of it; give the name to all her sons and daughters, as to one body with herself; supplicate heaven for the nature comprised in it for all,—and she will be safe. "Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me." Yes, whatever may remain undone, to be done, there is help and strength and salvation there. Let her not be driven from her post, disheartened in her course; let her not lay down the gauntlet, nor put off her armour, but, "Having done all, to stand." Or, as the same Apostle said, "My beloved sons, I warn you."

We have no will to work out our own salvation,—that was wrought by God in Christ; but we have power or will to come into the light of revealed truth,—to learn what the will of God is, and then to ask Him for His Holy Spirit to incline us to do it. Christ commands us to come out from darkness,—from the fetters and chains of thralldom and sin,—because He has *abrogated* once and for ever the *penalty* of sin; and now He says, "*I will* lead the blind by a way they know not; *I will* lead them into paths they have not known: *I will* make darkness light before them." "*I will* put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts."

We can do nothing right without the agency of the Holy Spirit. "*I will*" is found from the beginning of the Bible to the end ; let us rest on it, for it is God working in us. (Isa. xli. 13, 14, 17—19, 21 ; xliii. 5, 19, 22.)

"The Son of man quickeneth whom He *will*." "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13.) "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians." (Ex. iii. 8 ; Acts vii. 34.) And hence God's own command to look alone to Himself for help : "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." We have no will to work out our own salvation ; but we have the power so to work out these great truths, that they shall be established in our hearts and made savingly efficacious to our souls. The mind must work out and follow up the subject. We may not look to our sanctification for justification. We must look away from ourselves to Christ : if we do not, we shall never reach the goal. "Bless the Lord, O my soul : and all that is within me bless His holy name. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; Who healeth all thy diseases ; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." (Ps. ciii. 1, 3, 4.)

"They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them : and that rock was Christ." Christ does follow us in the hidden operation of His power, in Providence, in grace, in mercy, in truth, in love, in His Almighty protection, in His reconciliatory office, in His mediatorial function, by His Spirit, by His real presence ; if He did not do this we should be in hell ; for we have and we do daily destroy ourselves : but in Him is our help still found. We must look to Him for miracles of grace, and love, and power, for nothing else can save us. "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." We must rest

upon what God in Christ has done for us, and not on anything we can do for Him.

Then I leave the title of this book,

SALVATION.

And yet, because of the words of Christ, scarcely daring to revoke that of "Divine Decree, and Free Will." "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life."

But this grating rebuke shall not close this page: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Flow on, thou "River of God," till secret unbelief be lost in the mighty overflowing stream!

London, May 10, 1868.



DIVINE DECREE, AND FREE WILL ;

OR,

MORE NOTES ON PROPHECY.

CHAPTER I.

THE first three verses of this book are a Preface to the whole prophecy. The remainder of the chapter is a Preface to the Seven Churches ; and of the consecration of John to the prophetic office.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass ; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John :

2 *Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.*

3 *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein : for the time is at hand.*

The first thing clearly to understand concerning this prophecy is this, that it is " of Jesus Christ," and that it was given

unto Him by God. The meaning of this is, not that Christ was not God, that He was inferior to the Father, and needed to be instructed, or that He wanted power to act in His own right, but that when the work of redemption was done, the God enthroned all His attributes, omnipotence, and power, in short, Himself in the Redeemer; redemption having been a work greater than that of creation. Or, rather, God did thus exalt Himself in His own work of redemption, in the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. And thus it was Christ could say, even in His life, before His ascension into glory, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. xxviii. 18; xi. 27.) "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hand." (John xiii. 3; xvii. 23.) "All things are delivered unto Me of my Father. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand." (John iii. 35.) "Thou loveth Me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii. 24.) And thus it was Christ was exalted to the right hand of God, "Being by the *right hand* of God exalted." (Acts ii. 33.) He was the power of God. "*Thy* right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." (Exod. xv. 6; Ps. lxxxix. 13; cx. 1; Rom. viii. 34; Col. iii. 1.) And the 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25—28, fully explains this subject. The place of precedence was not ceded by God; but in the Redeemer He ascended a throne of higher glory.

Mark the reading of the verse, God gave the Revelation to Jesus Christ, to show to His true faithful people things which *must* shortly come to pass; there was a necessity for the conflict known to Himself. And He sent and signified these things by His angel, that is, by His anointed One, Jesus Christ, the "Messenger," by whom He had before sent into the world. As

it is written, "Jesus knowing that He was come from God, and went to God." The fact to be made known is, that God gave the prophecy, and that He by whom He gave it was the Lord of life and glory, who had been known to ascend into glory. The angel was Christ, and John the servant to receive the gift. Thus the book is Divinely authenticated.

"*Signified* it" simply means, made the Revelation by the symbols, figures, types, and language of the ancient Jewish Scriptures. The prophecy is a problem, which can only be explained by the Scriptures it is rooted in.

As the first verse tells us, the angel with the commission was Christ; so the second verse says that the "Servant John," to whom He was sent, was the same who wrote the Gospel bearing that name. Before Christ's ascension, He did so appoint him to receive the Revelation. (John xxi. 22, 23.) Probably the Gospel was not written till after this prophecy was given, but John had been an eyewitness of all things concerning Christ, and a record had been made (Luke i. 1—3), although it had not then appeared in the form we now have it.

The blessing promised upon him who should read, hear, and do the things written in the prophecy, is a spiritual one; that is, he is not only justified by faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, freed from the curse, but he is anointed by the Holy Spirit of God, whose teaching alone can enable him to read it. All the called servants of God and the prophets were so anointed. (Exod. xxviii. 41; Ps. cv. 15; Isa. vi. 57; Jer. i. 5—9; 1 John ii. 27.) If my reader will compare Dan. ii. 20, 21, 23, 30, 36 with Rev. xiii. 18, he will see that Divine wisdom alone can read this book.

4 *JOHN to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be*

unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come ; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne ;

5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him : and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

John, in this address to the seven Churches which were in Asia, simply pronounces upon them, and upon the seven Churches which they typified, the Divine benediction of the Gospel of peace, which the Lord Jesus Christ had pronounced upon the Church after His resurrection. (John xx. 19, 21, 26.) Doubtless it was intended to be a standing form of blessing throughout all ages. The life of the Church consists in an indwelling God : her visible form often changes, or becomes extinct ; but whenever she does so die, she rises into new resurrection life ; and this is just the meaning of this benediction, "From Him which is, and which was, and which is to come." God is always the same in the true Church, and by a spiritual law which He has ordained, she always rises into new existence. Could any greater blessing be pronounced upon her ? "And from the seven Spirits before His throne : " this signifies, from the seven Spirits of the seven Churches, of the seven periods ; language borrowed from the seven lamps of the tabernacle and

of the temple—one eternal Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, but of seven periods.

“And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness.” Christ was not only the faithful witness of the truth in His life, and before the bar of Pilate (John xviii 37), but He is a witness in the Church, and will be throughout all ages. The words of John seem rooted in His own words, “Lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world.” He is Himself always breathing upon her the blessing of grace and peace. He is “the Prince of peace,” and “the Prince of life;” that is, the spiritual Head of the Church. “He is the Head of the body, the Church,” and hence the spiritual succession here mentioned by John, “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father.” The spiritual nature is inherited through Christ. His Father is now our Father, and we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, heirs of the life of God. Oh, what an inheritance! And it is said here, this is the result of Christ having loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood; so virtually cleansed the corrupt fountain of our nature, that the Spirit of holiness can return to cleanse it actually.

“Behold He cometh with clouds.” Clouds were the known symbols of hosts of enemies, or of angels; and since this was written, Christ has come many times in judgment and in mercy. The destruction of Jerusalem was then at the very door, and in the resurrection of His Church in our glorious Reformation, with what hosts of angels did He come! We must not fix the comings of Christ spoken of to the time of His final coming to judgment, because we find discrepancies in His own words that tell us of different comings. “When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” (Luke xviii. 8.) “The

seventh angel sounded ; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our God, and of His Christ." (Rev. xi. 15.) So that His final reign will not commence in a moment when there is not faith on the earth.

The many proclamations by God of Himself in this book, "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending," have a very vital meaning ; and therefore I shall explain them here, that we may understand them as we proceed. This revelation of God of Himself is to the Church on earth, and therefore does not refer only to His unending existence as spoken of by David. (Ps. cii. 25, 27 ; xc. 4.) God dwells in the Church, and this is the cause of her perpetuity. When Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," He spake of the Christian Church that should rise upon and in Himself. His spiritual nature, or the God in Him, was the foundation of the Church ; and throughout every changing dynasty, every extinction of the visible body, the Spirit of God, the God will emerge, and reign and rule in ever-increasing glory. And this is the meaning of the Alpha and Omega in our terrene Church history.

Lazarus was a type of the dead body of the Jews ; now let us see how Christ brought good out of evil, life out of death. Jesus said that the sickness, or the disease of evil was not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Oh, that we could believe the same of all evil, and leave it with the Son of God ; what benefit would accrue to us, and what glory to Him !

"After that, Jesus said plainly, Lazarus is dead." The Jewish body was dead, the economy was then to pass away, to

become utterly extinct ; but out of it came a more glorious Church, a living body, and a Divine agent. And why? and how? Because Jesus said what is quite true, "I am the resurrection and the life;" the life of the body was in and through Himself: "Without Me ye can do nothing," and He caused it to take root in the new body, and to bring forth fruit to His glory, and to the praise of His great name. But He said again, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die;" no, a believing body can never die; here we take our stand, lay hold on eternal life, and live for ever. His inquiry was most pertinent, "Believest thou this?" Dear Lord, we do believe, and we believe that the visible body of the Church may die, even as Lazarus died; but out of her Thou wilt bring a more glorious body. "Lazarus come forth. And he that was dead came forth," will as surely be heard in the future, as it was heard in the past. Only that the Christian economy will never pass away, but the Christian Church will again take some new form. And this is the meaning of God so many times proclaiming Himself the beginning and the ending of her history.

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

John here relates what He had seen, and the directions that had been given to him. He had been banished to Patmos by Domitian, or Nero, for his faithful adherence to the cause of Christ, and for the faithful testimony he bore to Christian truth. The Christian Church was then under the most cruel persecution, and so he prefaced this prophecy that he was commanded to send to her by these tender expressions of condolence and sympathy. He identified himself as the John those Churches knew so well, tells them he was in the same tribulation as themselves, and a State prisoner in the isle of Patmos, for the witness he had borne of Jesus Christ.

From the day of Christ's resurrection, the first day of the week, the day on which He rose, was beyond all doubt sanctified, and set apart by Him to be henceforth the Sabbath-day. (John xx. 19, 26.) And we may suppose it was then named "the Lord's day," by those first Christians; John tells us that there was then very much done and said that was not written. (xx. 30, 31; xxi. 25.) He says here in the Revelation, that He was "in the Spirit" on that holy day: it may mean that he was performing the spiritual exercises of his holy religion; or that he was in a spiritual state, almost supernatural. Spiritual travail in his solitary, painful position, may have educed such a state of mind and of spirit. Then he says he heard behind him the voice of the Eternal One like the well-known Jewish trumpet. All the Jewish festivals or Sabbaths were ushered in by a trumpet, and this may have been the meaning of this voice here: it was an echo in John's heart of the ancient trumpet, or a response of God to His morning service. Christ, after His resurrection, appeared twice on the Sabbath to the disciples, "the doors being shut;" and this sudden appear-

ance in Patmos may also have been in answer to fervent devotion.

The Being thus present announced Himself to be the Eternal One, and commanded John to write in a book what He should reveal to Him by vision, and to send it to the seven Churches he had left under great persecution, and over which he had been overseer. Oh, that each Sabbath service might thus bring forth some fruit to God !

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks ;

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow ; and his eyes were as a flame of fire ;

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace ; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars : and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword : and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

John is here, as it were, in the midst of the ancient Temple service. There stood the golden candlestick with its shaft and six branches. (Exod. xxv. 31, 33, 34 ; xxvi. 35 ; xxxvii. 17 ; xl. 24 ; 1 Kings vii. 49 ; 1 Chron. xxviii. 15 ; 2 Chron. iv. 7.) The typical economy had passed away, but the spiritual reality had superseded it ; and by the association of the mind with the ancient service, John was to comprehend the spiritual constitution of the Church of Christ. Here it is revealed, the same in all ages, and amidst all changes.

Christ, the Head of the body, the Church, the Eternal High

Priest over the House of God, is the Being seen in the midst of the seven candlesticks : whether under the typical or the Christian economy, He is the same. (Heb. ix. 2, 3, 7 ; vii. 16 ; vi. 20 ; Lev. xxiv. 3, 4 ; chaps. viii. and ix.) The three books, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, should be read connectedly to understand this antitype of the type, this vision in "the temple of God." After the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another Priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after "the power of an endless life." This is the Divine Being here seen. The description, "like unto the Son of man," may refer to the Divine nature or presence in the human instrument ; or, it may be, the eternal God in the Son of man, who is revealed. The robes of office are those worn by the Jewish high priest ; but the robe of righteousness and the girdle of truth were signified. His hair, as white as wool, symbolized the eternity and purity of the priesthood of Christ. His eyes, as a flame of fire, reveal to us the piercing eye of Deity. His feet, like fine brass, are an emblem of His strength, and of the burning fire of eternal justice. (Deut. xxxiii. 25.) His voice, as the sound of many waters, signifies the voice of Christ by His many agents in the universal Church.

The seven stars in His right hand signify the spiritual priesthood as he explains later ; and the two-edged sword signifies "The Word of God." The Old Testament and the New, which is inspired, came forth out of His mouth. "His countenance as the sun shineth in his strength" may refer to the glorious Shekinah in the Holy of Holies in the Temple ; it may be intended to identify the same Being. (Ps. lxxxi. 1 ; xci. 1.) So glorious in holiness, and great in power, the natural eye cannot behold Him. The God and His eternal attributes are revealed

in this description of the Being in the seven candlesticks. And the truth of His own words is confirmed (Matt. xxviii. 20), "Lo, I am with you alway, unto the end of the world."

17 *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not ; I am the first and the last :*

18 *I am he that liveth, and was dead ; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

This revelation of God of Himself in Christ is very striking. He says He is "the first and the last," and still the human Being who was crucified. This ought to satisfy us if we had not another proclamation of the same truth. And another great truth here revealed is, that God is not now only alive to Himself, but also to His people, "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening spirit,"—a quickening spirit to all, "Behold I am alive for evermore." The human race, of which Christ is the Head, cannot now die : it receives life from its Head, "And the Head of Christ is God." This truth is the mainspring of human history ; and we shall find the continual springing and ever re-springing life in this book.

"And have the keys of hell and of death," This is literally true, God's own Spirit is the key of the tomb and of hell. (Rom. viii. 11.) They will deliver up the dead that are in them when He commands them to do so. But the assertion has another meaning. Death and hell mean here the two Satanic beings seen in other parts of this book (vi. 8 ; xx. 14). Christ has the key of their natures, His own Spirit is the antidote of it ; as when He says He has the key of David, that He can open and no man can shut, shut and no man can open. Let us fear Him who is thus invested with almighty power.

John said he fell at the feet of this August Being as dead. Oh, that He would inspire in us all the same reverence, and the same awe! How sadly wanting are we in the reverential feeling! But His real presence will be felt, for we find the same spiritual convulsion in the Prophets, when they were consecrated to office by Him. (Isa. vi. 5; Jer. i.; Dan. 10.) And this is the meaning of the act, "He laid His right hand upon me." This was the common form of consecration. (Num. viii. 10; Acts vi. 6; xiii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 14.) "The hand of the Lord was on Elijah." (1 Kings xviii. 46; 2 Kings iii. 15.) "The hand of the Lord was upon Ezekiel." (i. 3.) "The hand of the Lord was strong upon me." (iii. 14.) And this was the meaning here, Christ bestowed the gift of the Holy Ghost, to sanctify John to office. "Fear not, I am the first and the last." How calming and assuring; as though He had said, Others have gone before you in the sacred office, and others will come after you; but I am the same in all, and to all.

19 *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.* This verse is peculiarly striking, relatively to the manner in which I am now explaining the *Sevens* of Scripture. Seven periods, or dispensations of 666 years, which make 4,662 years, dated from the calling of Abraham to the end of 666 years in the fourth dispensation of the world's history. Three periods of 666 years in the Jewish dispensation; three of 666 in this Christian dispensation; and 666 into the third, or fourth from the creation of our first parents. I say the key of *seven*, given to us in Revelation, may be thus interpreted. And thus, as I have said, this command is very striking, "Write the things which thou hast seen," seen in the three candlesticks of the

Jewish dispensation in the past ; and the estate of the Church, of the one candlestick as it was then existing ; and the things which shall be hereafter ; or, as it is said in the first verse, "To show unto his servants things which must *shortly come to pass*." I say, by this interpretation, we understand the particularity of that verse.

20 *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches : and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.* The name angel throughout this book simply means a messenger, or sent one ; the same is sometimes employed to signify Christ, and the Holy Ghost. But here the seven representations of the true, hidden, spiritual Church, of the seven periods of 666 are signified. "As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." But these seven sent ones are spiritual, duplex beings ; the *seven* human instruments, and "the seven Spirits before the throne," mentioned in chapter i. 4. "I saw the seven angels which stood before God, and to them were given seven trumpets." (viii. 2.) This is the trumpet of the everlasting Gospel, and the angels are seven duplex beings, ministers of the Gospel. The seven lamps before the throne in the tabernacle, and the temple, typified these seven Spirits of God in the seven human instruments. "Write the things which thou hast seen." "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness as the *stars* for ever and ever."

But then it may be asked here, What is the distinction between the stars and the candlesticks ; and between the angels and the Churches ? I think the stars and the angels represent the genuine, true, spiritual priesthood ; and the candlesticks and the Churches represent the visible body of the Church.

There is this distinction throughout this book. And hence the warning, "Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place," (ii. 5), just as we have so often seen the visible Church removed, dispersed, cast off, as a garment that impedes the course of the inner life. Not so with the stars, "These things saith He that *holdeth* the seven stars in His right hand." (ii. 1.) They are held by Christ till their testimony has been borne, and their work done; and then they remain in the firmament of His own heaven for ever and ever. Their lights may sometimes be very faint—obscured; they may want rebuke as is heard in the voice to the Church of Sardis; the lamps may want trimming, to be supplied with more, and continually with more oil. "If thou *knewest* the gift of God," that His gift is His Holy Spirit, "and who it is that saith to *thee*, Give *Me* to drink, thou wouldest have asked of *Him*, and He would have given *thee* living water." Yes, if we would feed others, we must be fed from the bowl of the Godhead upon the top of the candlestick. (Zech. iv. 2.) The flame of eternal life must be kept alive by prayer, continual communion with God. And hence the rebuke to the angel of the Church of Sardis, "These things saith He that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars, I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead." The body, the Church, is dead, because the stars, the angels, are so faint, the light in them so dim; the life so ebbing, and so low.

But let us not forget that "the seven stars are the angels of the seven Churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven Churches." That is, the seven representatives of the spiritual priesthood; and the symbols of the seven visible bodies, the seven Churches.

CHAPTER II.

THE first four Churches of the seven are addressed by Christ in these two chapters. Seven such Churches there were in Asia, which I shall glance at, and then look at them as I have before explained : three in the Jewish dispensation ; three in the Christian, of 666 years in duration, which make up 3,996 years ; and 666 beyond this period, or, beyond the sixth period we now live in, making together 4,662 years.

Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write ; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks ;

2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil : and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars :

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent,

and do the first works ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6 *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.*

7 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches ; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

The Christian Church at Ephesus was the first in the circuit of the seven in Asia ; it was there St. John lived before his banishment to Patmos, and he returned to Ephesus, so that we quite understand why that Church should be the first addressed. At the time this was written it was one of the most celebrated cities in the world, famed for its superb Temple of Diana, which was accounted one of the seven wonders of the world. In the midst of such magnificence, and splendid idolatry, the Church there had need of this warning voice and exhortation to steadfastness in the true faith. St. Paul preached in this city (Acts xix. 24), and his Epistle to the Ephesians is one of the most spiritual and admonitory of all his writings.

The attitude of Christ in this first verse, holding the seven stars in His right hand, is a very striking one : the spiritual priesthood is in His hand ; by them He holds the light of the Gospel to the whole visible body, the Church, and to the world ; one individual dies, many instruments die, but the light is still there, it is holden by Him, and cannot be removed ; He is ever walking with it in the midst of the seven visible bodies, and saying He will remove them unless they repent, and turn to God truly.

In the second verse He says, He knows the labour, and the

patience of the angel of the Church of Ephesus, and how he cannot bear them that are evil; that was, He beheld in him a high attainment of sanctification, for nothing evidences this more than revolt against those who do evil. To a pure, earnest, and zealous mind evil will be a painful thing. And again Christ saw that the true spiritual body had tried many in the visible body, who said they were apostles, and were not, and had found them liars. This testing process is ever going on: it is the vocation of the righteous to awaken, and to try the body, to prove those who say they are disciples of Christ, Christians, whether they are, or not. "Try the spirits whether they are of God. . . . We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." (1 John iv.) A love of souls, pure motive, a single eye to the glory of God, and genuine zeal for His cause, evidence true apostleship. But, in large communities, and sometimes in small, there are always those who say they are apostles, but are not.

How beautiful the commendation, "Thou hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted"! These are rare virtues: to bear meekly, to be patient under persecutions and wrongs, and still to labour on for Christ's sake, is no mean attainment in the Divine life; and Christ says He knows, He is not ignorant of our doings, nor unmindful of the steadfastness of our purpose. This should be our consolation: "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved."

The next verses are to the visible Church, to the community of professors, but addressed as one with the true Israel. There are these two bodies within the same pale, and we must recognise

them distinctly; or, we cannot understand these voices so different in their tone. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." The love of the nominal professors soon grows cold, in affliction and persecution they are offended. The contrast of the two parties is striking. The one labours and does not faint; the other soon swerves from its first love. "Remember therefore from whence thou art *fallen*, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, *and will remove thy candlestick out of his place*, except thou repent." Here the day of grace is extended to the body of nominal professors; it is exhorted to repent, to return to the state of its first ardour, or else the visible Church will be removed—one of those removals, or changes in her position, we so often see. The stars are holden in her midst, "Ye are the light of the world," but the body, unless it receives the light, and walks according to the light of life, it is removed. Thus, as I have said, these voices are understood, although so distinct in their tone. The beautiful parable of the sower and the seed perfectly illustrates the mind of the Spirit in the two voices, and by the two bodies so plainly set forth. "They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, *which for a while believe*, and in time of temptation fall away." This verse is most striking, and so is the whole parable (Luke viii.). We may be surrounded by the light of heaven, within the pale of the visible Church, and within the hearing of the voice of the Spirit, and yet not be of the stars and angels, not spiritual priests to God; the way of life may not be revealed to ourselves, nor may we be able to make it known to others, whereas this is the true purpose of Christ walking in the midst of the

Churches. And hence the command to the hearers of the Word, "Hear what *the Spirit* saith unto the Churches." It is the Spirit of God and of Christ who is speaking in the angels, and He will be heard, either in salvation or condemnation. "Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." (xi. 1.) God has not set "the Sun of Righteousness" in this world for nought; the time of the minister and of the hearer is fixed, and He will demand a reckoning.

Thus this voice to the Church of Ephesus is suited to all the Churches in all ages: as much to the first Church of the 666 years of the Jewish dispensation as to any other. There were, then, those who required to be tried and proved, an Esau in the house of Isaac, multitudes of the family of Jehovah, still who were not of His spiritual seed: "They are not all Israel who are of Israel." And after the time of Joshua, of the settlement in Canaan, might it not have been said to the body, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen"? And did not God remove that first candlestick out of its place? The glory of the typical economy was lost when the sons of Eli made themselves vile, and he restrained them not; and the dynasty of the prophets superseded it.

The promise to this Church was peculiarly suited to the first Church of the second dispensation—"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." The Antediluvian Church had fallen; she had eaten of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," and rejected, or neglected, to eat of "the tree of life." Here God says the tree is restored in its primitive state; and to those who overcome He will give to eat of it. The meaning of

this is an equivalent to the words of Christ, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." He shall receive of the fulness of Christ, be established in the truth, satisfied as with marrow and fatness unto life eternal.

But I will not leave this voice of the Spirit to this first Church without glancing at the truth that human nature is alike in all ages: "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." (Prov. xxvii. 19.) And thus it is this wonderful prophecy admits of different interpretations, and may be applied to all ages. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." (Eccl. i. 2.) "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been." (iii. 15.) I do believe the prophecy admits of two interpretations. Divine decree and free will are perfectly compatible; to the eleventh hour grace is extended; "The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear;" but man must receive the cup of salvation while it is at his lips, or it may be dashed from him; and the long chain of evil of my other interpretation may ensue. Fatalism is not of God, nor am I a fatalist; the restoration of all things is at the very door: there is no such word as despair in the Christian vocabulary. "Cast down, but not in despair." Even to the *Seventh* Church, Christ says: "Behold I stand at the door, and knock." But man may refuse Him admittance, dash the proffered cup from his lips, neglect the accepted time, the day of salvation, and as I have said, all the prolonged horrors of my other interpretation of this prophecy may ensue. God grant to my people strength to lay hold on eternal life *now*.

While the lamp holds out to burn
The vilest sinner may return.

8 *And unto the angel of the Church in Smyrna write ; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive ;*

9 *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich), and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*

10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer : behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have tribulation ten days : be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

11 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches ; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

The Church in Smyrna was the second in circuit, but we may suppose St. John had the oversight of the seven. The voice is peculiarly addressed to the Apostolic Church of that period. Christ knew her works, her dire and terrible tribulation ; but He knew her to be rich beyond human possession or human knowledge, that life and eternal life were hers. He bade her not fear death, and inspirited her by the fact of His own death, and ever-living state. And He further strengthened His staunch adherents for martyr deaths by telling them He would give them a crown of life.

But this voice was as suited to the second period of 666 years in the Jewish dispensation as it was to the Apostolic Church. And first let us notice the voices that gird the *seven* periods, thus adopting them alike to all. "These things saith He that holdeth the *seven* stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the *seven* candlesticks.

These things saith the *first* and the *last*.

"These things saith He that hath the sharp sword with two edges." The Word of God is for all ages.

"These things saith the Son of God.

"These things saith He that hath the *seven* spirits of God, and the *seven* stars.

"These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth.

"These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God." It is God who speaketh to the Churches ; the God arches the *seven* ; and therefore what is said to one is said to all ; showing that the Prophecy *may be* interpreted according to my former or present interpretation. And hence the voice to *all the seven*, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the *Churches*." And we may not forget the command, "Write the things which thou hast seen ;" and we understand this command, because they were to typify what should be hereafter.

The Jewish dispensation was thus divided into three periods commencing from three cardinal points. "The generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations ; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations ; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations." (Matt. i. 17.) Then let us listen to this voice, to the angel of the Church of Smyrna, as representing *also* the Church from David to the carrying away into Babylon.

"These things saith the first and last, *which was dead and is alive*." Christ is the life of the body, and therefore in every

changing dynasty, in every new economy, it may be said of Him, "Which was dead, and is alive." I have shown this from the eleventh chapter of John, how Christ stood over the dead body of Lazarus—which represented the body of the Jews then dead—and proclaimed, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." This is so; Christ is the resurrection and the life, and those who believe on Him cannot die: He forms them into a new body, that He may be glorified thereby. And He taught the same truth when He said, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." And no where do we see the inner life, "the inner man," more plainly revealed than in the transition period, from the typical ceremonial, to the body of the prophets; God spoke in them, ruled in them, reigned in them; and in many points this voice was applicable to them. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison." The devil was as much in the dynasty of the Nebuchadnezzars, and in Pagan enemies at that time, as he was in Rome when the Apostles lived; and by them he did cast some into prison. (Jer. xxxii. 2; xxxvii. 15, 16; xxxviii. 6.) "And ye shall have tribulation *ten days*," that was, days of seven years, and referred to the Babylonish captivity: ten times seven are seventy. "These nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy years." (xxv. 11.) "Thus saith the Lord, after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon *I will visit you*, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place." (xxix. 10.) And so the voice continued, of Him who is "the first and the last." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a

crown of life." The non-extinction of the true Church ; her reinstitution in ever increasing might, is "A crown of life" to the suffering faithful few. "And let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith to all the churches."

By these things which had been the future was more conspicuously prefigured. I shall, therefore, now only explain these remaining voices according to my present method of interpretation.

12 *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write ; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges :*

13 *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is : and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.*

14 *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*

15 *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.*

16 *Repent ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

17 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches ; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.*

This third Church of Asia was situated about sixty-four miles north of Smyrna, or in the circuit of the seven. But I have said it represents the Church of the third 666 years of the Jewish dispensation. But the voice seems particularly addressed

to the true Church before the dispersion of the body. Let us look at the language as adapted to her position then.

The voice to this Church is God's. "The sharp sword with two edges" was His Word, the Old Testament and the New, in which He seemed to exult. He had said, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." (Isa. xli.) This was a prophecy of the New Testament, of an increase of the power of the Word. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual." And so God assumed this attribute, used this menace, not against believers, those strong in the faith, but against errors, and corruptions that then existed in the body, from which the Apostolic, or Christian Church was to be drawn. Thus the Gospel of St. John is said to have been written against these Nicolaitanes, of whom God complains, whose doctrines He hated; it was His sharp threshing instrument against error.

His eye was upon the faithful, "I *know* thy works;" it is a blessed thing to know that God *knows* our work of love, however small it may be; He does take cognizance of it, and the knowledge of it is treasured up in His mind. And again, He says, "I *know* where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is." In this world we do all more or less dwell where Satan's seat is. He is reigning in individuals, and we cannot escape coming into contact with him; but we must deal patiently and wisely with such, remembering that God *knows* our difficulties, that He feels for us, and will lead us tenderly in a right way, if we live in communion with Him, and lean upon His arm, in the meek performance of our appointed part in life. But "Satan's

seat" here, means the adversary of souls, and of God, in the Roman power, under whose yoke His people then were. And He said, He knew their works, and how they held fast the truth, even then ; and had not denied it, even when Christ, His faithful witness to it, was crucified for the truth, in the place where Satan then reigned and ruled.

But He said, He had a few things against them, because they submitted to the corruption of alliance with Rome ; that there were among them double-minded Balaams who were teaching the Cæsars to cast a stumblingblock before the true Israel, as Balaam taught Balac. The expression may refer both to the Imperial element, and to their connection with Pagan error—"To commit fornication." The Romish Anti-Christ originated in this unholy alliance, as St. Paul wrote, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work."

Then a great and mighty conflict lay before the little Church, the hidden few, and hence the greatness and equalness of the promise of the Spirit, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna," that was of the Spirit, real manna that the manna of the wilderness typified ; and referred directly to the Pentecostal gifts, and to the dispensation of the Spirit that was then about to supersede the economy of the law. "And I will give him a white stone," the holy oracle of the Spirit of God, the antitype of the Urim and Thummim ; the only true seal and badge of the spiritual, universal priesthood : Him of whom we may always inquire, and who will answer us when we come to Him. "And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." This name is the *Christian* name, indelibly written in the new nature, self-testifying, and engraven by the Spirit. That name that is

the Divine nature given ; and that nature whose name is Christian, "that no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." The true hidden Church had then to wade through seas of blood ; she had to suffer cruel persecution, and separation from her own body ; she had to be drawn out from the old constitution, and to be formed into a new one : she had to suffer persecution from Rome, to break the Roman bond, and to extricate herself from its thrall ; she had to witness the destruction of the holy city, and to submit to national dissolution ; but this was the promise made to her by God ; to him that should struggle through the revolution, convulsion, regeneration, should partake of the spiritual supply of the new economy ; be inducted into the priestly office by the gift of the Spirit, and receive the New name of Christian. "Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." (Isa. lxii. 2.) Thus was death the herald of life.

18 *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write ; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass ;*

19 *I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works ; and the last to be more than the first.*

20 *Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*

21 *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication ; and she repented not.*

22 *Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.*

23 *And I will kill her children with death ; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts : and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

24 *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak ; I will put upon you none other burden.*

25 *But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*

26 *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations :*

27 *And he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers : even as I received of my Father.*

28 *And I will give him the morning star.*

29 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

This voice to this fourth Church represents the first 666 years of this Christian dispensation : and how well do we understand it. The voice of the last Church was God's : the Son, as it were, stood smitten in the day of His humiliation ; for I have said that voice was particularly addressed to the Jewish Church before her dispersion : now, "the Son of God" resumes the rein of government, and says His eyes are as a flame of fire, they pierce and search out all that is unholy and impure ; "And His feet are like fine brass," He had trodden the wine-press of God's wrath alone ; and of the people there was none with Him. (Isa. lxiii. 3.) Justice had been satisfied, it could demand no more ; but then it was the most glorious attribute of His nature. He had said, "I will in no wise justify the wicked ;" but now He can be just, and the justifier of the weakest believer ; and hence His feet like fine brass. It will

be seen that these attitudes are the same as the description of the God-man in the seven candlesticks. (i. 13—15.)

He said He knew the works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience, and works of the early Christian Church, and her works to be more than her patience; so that the Divine life had yet to be perfected. Patience is here named as above even charity itself. To wait calmly and patiently for Christ in the darkest day of persecution and distress is no mean virtue, and must bring down an abundant blessing.

And then He went on to say, But with all these graces of the Spirit, He had a charge against that early Christian body, because she suffered the woman Jezebel, a false prophetess and teacher, to teach, and to seduce to idolatry, some of the members of that body. Now, it is most important to know what this evil nature was that had so early woven itself into the existence of the Christian Church, and was undermining her very foundation; or, rather, who was this spiritual enemy who had taken up so determined a stand against Christ in His going forth to bring the world within the pale of His Gospel? Plainly it was the old Pagan woman of the world's history. False religions had ever been the stronghold of Satan. Balaam was a false prophet, but in his ministry he imitated as closely as possible the religion of the true God: "Build me here *seven* altars, and prepare me here *seven* oxen and *seven* rams." (Num. xxiii.) Jezebel was an incarnation of Satan, but she was the wife of one of the Kings of Israel, and seduced him, not only to the grossest idolatry, but also to the foulest deeds of murder. And so the mythological religions of Greece and Rome were of this same evil, being called in Revelation "The man of sin," "The prince of this world," "Antichrist," a being opposed to

Christ. The four beasts of Daniel revealed the regal enemy, and in Rev. xvii. is revealed the woman supported by, and seated upon the beast, spiritually one, and with *seven* heads, stretching through seven periods. The fourth beast of Daniel was the Roman power (vii. 7), and its paramour was its false religion, that deep mythological system that baffles all attempts to fathom or describe; and in whom presided the evil spirit, who they thought was the good genius who ruled the destiny of man. And we must remember the Jewish nation, and the Jewish Church was in alliance with this corruption when Christ came; that His charge laid against the last Church was that some held the corrupt doctrine of the old Pagan religion of Balaam, who, because he could not curse God's people himself, taught the regal power to ensnare them. And so this same old Pagan idolatress descends down into the next 666 years; and, as we shall see later, raises again her impious head onward still, although in another form. It has been said the Church of Smyrna was the purest of the seven, because she was the poorest; not one charge was laid against her. And so, perhaps, the Christian Church would have remained pure if she had remained poor; but, when under Constantine she was protected by the secular arm, her inner life declined, her strength failed. Balaam, because he could not seduce her, did indeed teach Balac to cast a stumblingblock before her. And this is just what Christ complains of in this voice to the *fourth* Church,—corruption through alliance with some foreign power, with the evil spirit of the Jezebel of old. The spiritual genius of Rome did thus migrate into Christianity, and call itself Christian, the better to deceive, as the Evil One had always imitated as closely as possible the religion of Jehovah.

"I gave *her* space to repent of her fornication ; and she repented not." God has given to the Pagan Church time to repent. The Church of Christ has been in the world as a light upon the table, as a city on a hill ; by the Angels of the Churches He has been holding forth the light of life to her. What a light she was in Egypt, in Babylon, in the great Assyrian empire ! In Rome, has not God given her time to repent of her alliance with the devil ? What a light was the early Christian Church to almost the whole world ! but it has not repented of its spiritual affiance with the prince of darkness. And so God said He would cast this spirit of whoredom into a bed, into a state of more total corruption ; and those who were in spiritual alliance with it into great tribulation, except they repent. This was a direct reference to the Romish Antichrist of the next 666 years ; a prophecy and a Divine warning of it, except they should repent. And so the remainder of this voice is of that terrible tribulation, and of promises to those who should overcome.

"I will kill *her* children with death,"—with spiritual corruption so deep and so deadly that her estate shall be death. "And all the Churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts : and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." God could only say this to His people when they had denied and rejected the Lord that bought them. (2 Pet. ii. 1.) When they had swerved from the faith, from truth, from Christ, and had recourse to the world, human authority, and other corrupt means unlawful to them, then should come down upon them this awful denouncement ; for it is a most awful one to receive according to their works. If the best of men in the world's history were to receive according to

their works their end must be hell. But what will the end be of false teachers and false prophets who bring in damnable heresies? The lowest hell.

Then Christ addressed the faithful, and said to them who had not known the corrupt leaven of heresy and the depths of Satan, He would put upon them no other burden than to wade through the spiritual conflict, and again charged them to hold fast the truth till He came.

"He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." They who should wade through that darkest night of the world's history, the reign of the Romish Antichrist, should receive spiritual power to restore the nations to Christianity, and should rule those who obstinately persevere in rebellion, with a rod of iron, with the sceptre of justice, as the vessels of a potter shall be broken to shivers: "even as I received of my Father." (Referring to Psalm ii. 9; Isaiah xxx. 14; Jer. xix. 11.) We know how Christ did break to shivers His enemies in the destruction of Jerusalem, and in the condemnation of the world; and so it will be again to those who do not come out of the corrupt Babylon and of the world.

"And I will give him the morning star,"—the brightness of Christ's coming, the glory of His return. And then occurs the so oft-repeated exhortation, Let him who has spiritual understanding give heed to what the Spirit of God is saying.

CHAPTER III.

In this chapter are three addresses to the three remaining Churches of the Seven.

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write ; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars : I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die ; for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with me in white : for they are worthy.

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment ; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The Church in Sardis was the fifth in circuit in the Asiatic churches ; and about thirty-three miles to the south of Thyatira. Sardis was once the renowned capital of Croesus and the rich Lydian kings ; and it was therefore important that in so magnificent a city Christianity should be established.

But here I am going to explain this voice of the Spirit to this Church as to the Church of the second 666 years of this Christian dispensation, from the year 666 to 1332, which period includes the reign of the Romish Antichrist. Let us listen to the voice as relating to that dark period.

"These things saith He that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars." Yes, even in that darkest night, Christ Himself held forth the light of the Spirit of God, in the fifth star, or angel in His right hand. The true hidden Church is never more conspicuous than in dense darkness, and in her emergence therefrom ; then it is her Divine life and power are manifested, and human strength found to be a thing of nought. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name to live and art dead." The Roman Catholic Church of that period had a *name* to live ; it had taken to itself the *name* of Christian, which name implies the nature or life of Christ, from Him, the Church's living Head. Almost all the visible body was then Roman Catholic, and had taken that name that signified life ; but it was dead, without the life of God through Christ, that could alone make it Christian.

"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die ; for I have not found thy works perfect before God." This seems to have been addressed to the vacillating, compromising, nominal professors of the professed Protestant Church—such there will always be in large communities ; and

we must remember the warning, prophetic voice to the last Church: "All the Churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." Here, in the fifth Church, the threat seems being put into execution, as the preceding threat had been so executed: "I will kill her children with death." Give them over to deadly, damning heresy. And here it is said, "Thou art dead." And it is very remarkable that under the *fifth* trumpet the command to the horde of false teachers is, "Hurt only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." (ix. 4.) Thus we see that even Divine sufferance of heresy is to awaken men to the truth, to make them call upon the Spirit of God, who alone can enlighten them.

"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent." It well becomes us sometimes to pause, to recount our mercies, the opportunities God has given us of becoming better than we are,—the voices of providence and of grace we have heard; and by these exercises to become more steadfast in the faith, and to repent more and more of our misdeeds, till we reform and attain to the perfectly justified state.

"If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." This is a reference to those dispersions and dissolutions that overtake the visible body of the Church from time to time. Here it meant that the nominally professing body should receive the same judgment, or be condemned with the Romish body when Christ came; and hence the cry, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive

not of her plagues." "I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." These, Christ's own voices, should rouse us to a just abhorrence of the heresies of that spurious, counterfeit, corrupt Church; and to vigilance and watchfulness, that we in no way harbour the traitor in the bosom of the Church of Christ; His denouncements are plain and audible, as against all other unrighteousness.

"Thou hast a few names *even in* Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." Were there not many a pure Church, even in that dark night, that did not defile its garments with the corruption by which it was surrounded? Yes: her firmament is always the purest when judgments are abroad. And the promise that she should walk with Christ in white, was fulfilled. She came forth from behind the blackness, and is this day a glorious monument of His faithfulness. It is very remarkable that it is said under the *fifth* seal, "White robes were given to every one of them." (vi. 11.) And the prophecy of this conflict, and the promise to those who should wade through it, in the voice of the last Church, is, as I have before shown, not less remarkable.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels." Is not the raiment of the Christian Church now white,—glorious, Divinely bright? And does not her name still stand in the covenant of grace, of blood, made at Sinai (Ex. xxiv. 8), in opposition to the covenant of works there made? Is it not indelibly written in "the Book of Life," in

"the Covenant of Blood," "The Lamb's Book of Life," made at the last Paschal supper? "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." That is, the blood of Christ was the antitype of the blood of the Covenant, and then about to be shed for all. And I repeat the question, Does not the name of the Christian Church stand unblotted out in that book of life? Oh, surpassing immunity! it does: by the grace and power of Him who shed the blood for us! Hell, however incog., cannot now prevail against her; her life is hid with Christ in God.

And then again Christ said He would "confess her name before His Father, and before His angels,"—confess her to be indeed Christian, not a counterfeit, but of Himself. And has He not done this? Is she not the acknowledged true Christian Church before earth and heaven? Confessed to be such by Christ? Oh then, let us hold fast our faith in the most deadly conflicts, in the darkest day. Those who do so will assuredly be thus confessed by Him before God and His holy angels. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

7 *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;*

8 *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*

9 *Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

10 *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

11 *Behold, I come quickly : hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

12 *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out : and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God : and I will write upon him my new name.*

13 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

Philadelphia was about twenty-seven miles distant from Sardis, on the south-east of it. There are now a few Christian Churches there, but the whole country is under the dominion of the Turks.

But I must explain this voice to the Church of Philadelphia according to my present theory, and read in it a voice to the last 666 years of this Christian dispensation, from the year 1332 to the end of the 2000 years. The voice is peculiarly adapted to the Reformed Protestant Church, although we must read the Christian page by Jewish dialect. It was addressed to both Jews and Gentiles ; the pale of the Christian Church ever being open to all. It is now open to all, and the latter part of the appeal seems particularly addressed to the Jews.

Christ in the opening presents himself as He who hath the key of David, who openeth a door of office, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth. His words were rooted in Isaiah xxii. 22 : "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder ; so he shall open, and none shall

shut ; and he shall shut, and none shall open." In His ministry Christ proclaimed Himself to be the Being to whom this high prerogative was intrusted : " I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xvi. 19 ; Luke xi. 52.) Here in the Revelation He identifies Himself the same being, the Head of the Church, and the one holy and true God. (Jer. x. 10 ; 2 Chron. xv. 3.) At the end of the dark ages, at the dawn of our glorious Reformation, did He not thus present Himself to His Church, and open to her a door that no man could shut ?

" I know thy works." To all these seven Churches Christ makes this acknowledgment, " I know thy works." And to know is equal to reward, because He cannot be unfaithful or unjust ; faith, patience, labour, love, will be rewarded by Him. And so in these verses, Christ who had watched the constancy, the faithful service of His beloved Church in that dark day of tribulation and martyrdom, reappeared to her, and proclaimed, " Behold," see it, seize the opportunity ! " I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it : for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Rome could not then shut the door of Divine office that was opened ; the devil with all his legions could not shut it, the gates of hell could not prevail to oppose ; the Reformation burst the bars of darkness ; and the Church of Christ came forth from behind the cloud in a glory she had never known before. Perhaps her little strength was ebbing, her inner life was faint and low, but it was then Christ appeared to increase it, and to give her a crown of life and glory, because she had kept His word, and had not denied His name. Oh for life and strength to maintain the conflict, even to this extremity !

“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie.” “Of the synagogue of Satan,” means of the Apostate Church of corrupt Rome. Satan seeing the success of the Church of Christ, the wisdom of God in the Divine institution, determined to have a Church too, and to imitate the original in outward form as much as possible, the better to deceive; or rather to overdo it and eclipse it, the better to deceive; but Christ has most graciously unmasked the deceiver, and says, that community of people is “the synagogue of Satan.” And He says here of those nominally professing Christians within the pale of His people, with whom His Spirit has been so long striving, who say they are Christians and are not, but do lie, He will suffer them to be so deceived by Satan, that they shall enter his corrupt Church: and then He said of the base-born body, “See, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.” Has not Rome been so subjected? And while she is still struggling for power, for temporal supremacy, does she not see that the Protestant Reformed Church is the loved one of Christ? That she is honoured, exalted, and glorified of Him? Oh, that she could so see,—that she would renounce heresy, and embrace the faith of Christ in its simplicity and purity! Let this be our aim,—to lower our standard to the level of the love of Christ, that even Rome may be won by the graces of His spirit.

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” This voice is to the Christian Church at the present moment. Clouds are gathering, a great spiritual conflict must be fought,

a great Gospel commission must go forth, such as has never gone forth before ; the culminating ordeal must be gone through, "to try them that dwell on the earth." The battle of the day of Almighty God must be fought in the place called Armageddon ; and Christ says here He will keep His true, hidden Church, that has been so faithful to Him, from that hour of temptation. Probably it will be an overwhelming temptation to depart from the faith, and to lose our hold on eternal life ; and hence the further imperative command and proclamation : "Behold, I come quickly." Dear reader, if this be the sixth Church, will not Christ come quickly ? Yes, quickly may the voice be heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him." And then the injunction, "Hold that fast which thou hast." Do not let go the truth, do not deny my name : hold them up, and hold them forth. Fight, conquer, and seize the crown, let no man take it from you. This inspiring proclamation is very remarkable relatively to my other interpretation of this prophecy. Oh, how possible to miss the goal, to lose the crown, to suffer a later age to take it ; how possible is it to be driven back into the wilderness ; and how possible is it now, by the help and grace of God, to take the world and to establish the kingdom of Christ throughout the earth. Oh, Church of Christ, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

The next verse is a voice to the whole world, but is particularly applicable to the Jews. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." That is, he that overcometh the fierce conflicts of the closing scene shall be made a conspicuous monument of grace and of usefulness in the temple of God ; and shall not

suffer any more dispersion, or dissolution, but remain eternally in that eternal temple. "And I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." I have said, this is alike applicable to all new converts, to Jews, and Gentiles; but it seems particularly to apply to the Jews. We must remember, this is the *sixth* Church, and that it is under the *sixth* seal, and under the *sixth* vial that the first fruits of the Jewish Church rise from the dead, and that the Euphrates is dried up for her to go in and possess her ancient inheritance. Then this form of service in this verse is her induction into the Christian Church. It is rooted in Christ's own words: "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. xxviii. 19.) This is now a part of our baptismal service; and Christ employed it in the induction of these new converts, or spiritual victors, in the last days, in their induction into the Christian Church. It will be seen in a moment that the words in Matthew are rooted in Christ's words to Mary after His resurrection: "Go to my *brethren*, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." (John xx. 17.) Christ had then linked earth to heaven; He was Himself the connecting link. He had brought about the recovery, or restoration; and He here proclaimed the family of heaven and earth one by Himself. So that our baptismal service is one of adoption as well as of induction. If Mary had not been thus faithful to her vocation, if she had not been at the tomb to receive from Christ this proclamation of the Covenant being then fulfilled, we should have had no baptismal service, no

home in our Father's house, no place in His family, or in His bosom; no family name; no spirit of adoption. But, as it is, Christ says, "*I will write upon him the name of my God,*"—that is, by the Holy Spirit, give him the Divine nature. *My God*, is a direct reference to Christ's proclamation of the Covenant of the Messiah being fulfilled: "I ascend unto *my God*, and your God." The relationship of God and Father was restored, and so the form of service continues: "And I will write upon him the name of the city of *my God*, which is new Jerusalem,"—that is the Christian Church *spiritually* one with the Eternal City; and hence the further explanation, which cometh down out of heaven: "From my God." This was a reference to the Pentecostal baptism: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." (Matt. iii. 11.) So that true baptism is the baptism of the Spirit: the form is nothing without this. And again, "I will write upon him my new name." The name *Christian*, the new Gentile name of Christ which had been prophesied of, and in which He so exulted: "Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." (Isa. lxii. 2.) "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." The literal translation of this would be, they were there first named Christians by the Holy Ghost. (Acts xi. 26.) The name *Christian* implies the *nature* of Christ, the Divine spiritual bestowment. The whole is rooted in the new covenant promise made by the prophets. (Jer. xxxi. 33; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) In that which Christ called, "The promise of *my Father*." (Luke xxiv. 49.)

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

14 *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write:*

These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God ;

15 *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot : I would thou wert cold or hot.*

16 *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

17 *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked :*

18 *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

19 *As many as I love I rebuke and chasten ; be zealous therefore, and repent.*

20 *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock ; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

21 *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

22 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

Laodicea lay south of Philadelphia, in the way to return to Ephesus. The seven churches stood in a circle, in the order in which St. John has described them, so that it is very probable they were all more or less under his own immediate care. In St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, there is frequent mention of this Church in Laodicea ; he begs that when read it may be sent to her (ii. 1 ; iv. 15, 16) ; and commands the Colossian

Church also to read the epistle from Laodicea. In his Epistle to the Colossians, the doctrine of Christ is pre-eminently his leading theme. He exhorts them to steadfastness, and cautions them against the pernicious errors, "philosophy and vain deceit," that had even then crept into her bosom; and as the Epistle was intended for the two Churches, we may suppose there was the same corruption in the Laodicean Church. And from the charge made against her by Christ in this address, we know that lukewarmness and self-righteousness were the faults for which she particularly came under condemnation. Her doom seems to have been more conspicuously terrible than the other six; for although the city was far-famed for its greatness and glory, and there are still ruins that show how magnificent it must have been, and although the Church was the mother Church of sixteen bishoprics, yet, now they are all passed away without leaving a wreck behind, their localities are forsaken by men, and left to the beasts and unclean reptiles.

But we are not only come to the last Church in the circuit of the seven in Asia, but we are also come to the last of the seven in the world's history: the one foreshadowed the other. And as the curtain of time has fallen upon the one, so the pall of death seems now about to fall upon the other. And the near approach of so awful a fact should arouse us, not only to solemn reflection, but also to mighty action. "Who may abide the day of His coming! And who shall stand when He appeareth?" Let us listen to His most awful voice; let us look at this most solemn revelation. One scarcely knows which is the most awful to think of, the end of the world as very distant or very near.

"These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness,

the beginning of the creation of God." The Amen means here "the true God." (2 Chron. xv. 3; Jer. x. 10.) It was the designation of God most commonly employed by the Jews; and hence the voice to the last Church, "These things saith He that is Holy, He that is true." These were not only the names by which God was known to the Jews, but we do still appeal to Him as the Holy and True; and hence the affirmation, "The faithful and true witness." God in Christ, as seen in the seven candlesticks, is the faithful witness: "Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness." (i. 5.) He was first the faithful witness of Himself as God; with all His humility with regard to temporal glory, He maintained most absolutely the truth that He was God; He set Himself forth to be looked up to as God, and never once lowered His pretention: He could not deny Himself. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John xviii. 37.) And thus, secondly, He is ever in the Church to witness of those who are of the truth—of those who, amidst all afflictions and changes, hold fast His name and His doctrine, or the truth of Himself.

"The beginning of the creation of God." These three names have the same meaning: the one holy and true God; He by whom all things were made, and by whom all things consist. In a far back eternity God did undertake to blot out, utterly to destroy, an evil nature that had existence somewhere, and He undertook to do this by His Son; once for all so to atone for sin, that it might be destroyed by His nature being brought into contact, and hence into antagonism with it. "I will utter things which have been kept secret from *the foundation of the*

world." (Matt. xiii. 35.) "Thou lovedst Me *before the foundation of the world.*" (John xvii. 24.) "God hath chosen us in Him *before the foundation of the world.*" (Eph. i. 4.) "The works were finished *from the foundation of the world.*" (Heb. iv. 3.) "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." (1 Peter i. 20.) Thus, although we are in a sinful state, and inherit a nature foul and damning, still, as we have seen from Christ's proclamation of the fulfilled covenant by Mary, and His institution of the baptismal service therefrom, that we are restored to God,—to our Father: we are adopted in Christ, redeemed by Him, and sanctified by His Spirit. The recovery is as complete as the fall; and this is just what we might have expected, and nothing less, from the God. Not only is the relationship of the creature to the Creator restored, as though we had never sinned, but by the link of Christ's humanity, the relationship between the child and the Father is restored: "Go to *my brethren*, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father." And so at baptism we are brought into His house, His family, His bosom—redeemed creatures and adopted children. I would here extract Eph. i. 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, but I leave my reader to turn to the verses. This is the Being, God in Christ, whose voice is heard to this last Church, who is the faithful witness of Himself, the Lord of life, and the Saviour of the world; and also the witness of those who believe in Him, and receive Him to life eternal. Oh, how momentous is the gain of those who do so, and how awful the loss of those who refuse to hear, and who reject Him! And hence His appealing, striking, arousing language to this last Church. He cannot do more than He has done to witness of Himself; nor

can He do more than He has done to arouse us to witness of Him. The name by which He here reveals Himself is synonymous with "The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." This voice is a most striking one, spoken as it is to the last Church of the world's history. There is not one word of commendation in it; no mention of patience, of labour, charity, service, or faith; but I know thy works, that they are without zeal and without love. Lukewarmness, in consequence of great worldly prosperity, is the charge laid against her. "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and *increased with goods*, and have need of nothing." To the Church of Smyrna Christ said, "I know thy poverty, but thou art rich." And some one has said it was the purest Church of the seven, because it was the poorest; but here Christ reverses the case, and says this Church is poor because it is rich and increased in goods. "And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." The reference here is to Ezek. xvi., where the Church is represented by the similitude of a wretched infant, naked, destitute, uncleansed, and helpless,—even as a thing dead, till the Great Giver of life said to it, "Live." Here in the Revelation the meaning is, that by nature the human family is the same in the end of the world as in the beginning, in age as in infancy. The chapter in Ezekiel I have referred to should be read here. In ease, prosperity, in health and vigour, in time of great temporal glory, it is very difficult to know that we are spiritually poor, blind, and naked,—to know

our spiritual poverty, to fathom the depth of our corrupt nature, and to comprehend the absoluteness of the grace of Christ. And thus it is He says to this rich Church, "I counsel thee, I advise, I warn, I exhort thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." By gold here is meant wisdom, the knowledge of God in Christ, the Saviour of the world. (Job xviii. from the twelfth verse ; Prov. viii. 9—1.) If we do not receive Christ into our hearts by faith, we often buy the knowledge of Him by sad experience, and at a very great cost ; we are left to feel the depth of our own corruption, our wretchedness, our misery, and helplessness. The truth of Christ was tried in the fire, even in the furnace of judgment and of death ; but it came out pure genuine gold, and it is able to make us rich. And again He exhorts us to buy of Him white raiment, that we may be clothed, that the shame of our sins do not appear. More or less we must buy the light of life ; deep experimental knowledge is a very different thing to a dead faith, and this cannot be had but, to some extent, at our own cost. This white raiment is the righteousness of Christ, His obedience to the law and to death ; also the work of His own Spirit on the heart, transforming the disposition and the life. But even these must cost us something,—self-renunciation. Christ cannot be enthroned until self be cast down : "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." At this cost only can we purchase the life of God, the glory of Christ ; with some it is more than they can pay, more than they are willing to risk, and so they miss the prize. And yet Christ says He advises, exhorts, and warns everyone to do it.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." This is the

experimental cost. As I have said, in prosperity and temporal glory we do not feel our spiritual destitution ; but in adversity we consider. "Be zealous, therefore, and repent." Christ does not wish to rebuke, or to chasten, but He says, He does it in *love*, to sanctify, and to make holy.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock ; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." How prominently did Christ always set forth Himself ; here He stands a Divine insurance against impending peril ; a safe and certain insurance against the loss of the soul. He says, "Let me into your house, into your earthly tabernacle, before it is dissolved, before it falls, before it is consumed by the fire of eternal justice. My covenant with you is sure, safe, and legal : let me in. I will save your soul alive, and raise up your body at the last day." (John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54.) Four times is this promise or assertion made in this chapter. Is it not Christ standing at the door of the human heart, knocking, and saying, Do let Me in ? That insurance, or covenant of security with the sinner, was made by His own blood. His blood was the premium paid to secure the sinner against loss and danger ; and the mention of it here is most remarkable, as though He urged the validity of the covenant, of the premium paid, the more strongly because it was the last time ; and so He called His importunity, the urgency of the case, knocking, knocking, knocking. "I will come in, and sup with him" is a reference to His institution of His last supper before His crucifixion. Matt. xxvi. 26—28 should be read here to understand the force of this pressing appeal for admission. The Jews ate the Passover the evening before their deliverance from Egypt. (Exod. xii.) By faith in

the blood of the Lamb, in the blood of the covenant, in the Word of God, they did receive Christ into their midst, to deliver them from Egypt, to go with them through the Red Sea, through the great and terrible wilderness, into Canaan. And so we, by faith in His blood, are delivered from Satan ; by faith we do receive Him into our hearts, to go with us through the journey of this life ; and in the last long journey of death shall we not need Him ? Yes : and hence this, His earnest application for admittance : I will come in and confirm the compact with you, and you shall do the same with Me. "This is my blood of the new covenant," of the covenant of grace in distinction from the covenant of the law, "which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Whether we will receive that truth or not, it is the blood of Christ alone that can cleanse from sin. By faith in His own blood He was Himself delivered from death, and from the grave. (Heb. xiii. 20.) By it God raised Him from the dead ; and "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. viii. 11.)

Then, without Christ there is no indemnification for the sinner, no restoration to a state of innocence, no security against the loss of his soul. No indemnity or recompense made him for the injury he has sustained from Satan. "When the blade was sprung up, *and brought forth fruit*, then appeared *the tares also*." The evil nature is there, in the heart of the child, the youth, the man ; circumstances may have very much to do in the development or suppression of the evil, but it is there ; and without an intervention, a satisfaction, a substitution, complete salvation and restoration, like that of God's through

Christ, the fallen child of Adam cannot be saved. And thus do we understand this beseeching attitude of Christ, in all ages, to every individual, old and young, rich and poor; to the poverty-stricken Church of Smyrna, and to the increased in goods in Laodicea. Behold Me, it is I who am knocking at the door of your heart, by losses, afflictions, rebukes, chastisements, by the deaths of myriads around you, by Providence to make you hear, by love to reach your heart, by the certain knowledge of your mortal nature; open to Me the door of that barred and bolted heart, and I will come in and celebrate with you the memorials of my grace, of reconciliation, peace, and of eternal life: and now, even at the eleventh hour. Oh, my dear reader, do you see Christ! Is He all these things to you? You will never find peace till you find it at His feet. "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

The earnest appeal, application to be received, was made by Christ to the Jews before the destruction of their holy city and final dispersion; but "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not;" He was obliged to leave them, and to go into other cities, as He said, "To them, therefore, am I sent;" and of that wilfully blind, deluded, obstinate people it was written, "*Behold*, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. xxiii. 38.) If we will not behold, see Christ, while He is knocking at the door, we must behold destruction when it cometh.

But have I not said, according to my present interpretation of this prophecy, that we are living in the *sixth* period of 666

years, that only 122 years remain of it, and that then this last cry will be heard, Behold, I stand at the door for the last time. At the door of the world's heart, if it will not see Me now, hear Me now, and celebrate with Me now the memorials of my peace and love, I shall depart as I did from my people of old, and a much longer dispersion, and a much sorer punishment will be yours. Oh, ought not this voice to arouse us to zeal, to spiritual, holy exercises, to a love of souls, to an earnest effort for the salvation of the world? We may now go forward with the banner of Christ, and save the world; or we may be defeated, and the victory be the enemy's. We have coal, we have steam, we have money, we have *prestige*, we have glory. God has put all the means into our hands; and above all, we have Christ. We may not go forth to this conflict without Him, without His Word, our insurance policy; if we do, we shall certainly sustain great loss, and utterly fail; but upon safe and legal ground the world may now be won. "Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation;" but the battle lost, that conflict may be a long one.

The promise to this Church is as culminating in glory, and as plainly announces the end of time, as the voice to the nominally professing body announced the end of the day of grace.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." We cannot trace the Christian in his course, nor the Church of Christ as a body higher than this. To sit with Him on His throne, to take part with Him in the administration of Divine government, to share in the glory of His spiritual kingdom, is the climax of all promise. This was

said first to the infant Christian Church, which had then to wade through the bloody conflict of her early persecution by the Roman power ; and seems rooted in Matt. xix. 28: " Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Is not the constitution and far-famed glory of the Christian Church the fulfilment of this promise? And secondly, as relating to this seventh dispensation of 666 years, it was spoken to those who should overcome in the last great conflict in the place called Armageddon (Rev. xvi. 14—17), to those who should overcome the apathy innate in themselves, so as to be victors in that last decisive battle. And thirdly, it was spoken to all who should so overcome as to inherit eternal life: what is written of Christ is written of His Church: " He shall reign for ever and ever." (xi. 15.) " They shall reign for ever and ever." (xxii. 5.) We accept this revelation as a part of the Holy Scriptures of truth, and the things promised therein as facts already fulfilled: " These words are true and faithful." (xxi. 5.) Then do we not pause to contemplate a future so surpassing all finite conception ; no mental effort can realize the state of being enthroned with God in the glory of His nature ; in the splendours of eternity ; but with the eye of the Spirit of God we do already see the holy, glorious estate: " God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) And is not that inheritance, made so sure to us by Christ, worth a struggle to overcome our native selves? Thank God for the revelation we possess! In it we see Christ upon His throne (Acts ii. 33 ; Rev. xx. 11 ; xxi. 5) ; let us keep the eye of faith fixed on Him, and take His precious promises with

us to our life's end ; let us never rest while a single sin spot remains, for the promise is only "to Him that overcometh ;" but we can never attain to a perfect state but by the blood of the Lamb.

But it may be asked, How can this voice to the *seventh* Church be made to agree with the voice under the *seventh* trumpet, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ"? I answer, The first voice is to the nominally professing Christian Church, excepting the twenty-first verse. There will be some such to the end of time. The voice is one of pressing invitation to them, while the voice under the trumpet simply proclaims the kingdoms of the earth become Christian. Doubtless, at that time nominal professors will be found in all, so that the urgent appeal will be made to all. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

CHAPTER IV.

THIS chapter is a part of the preface to the seven seals. In spirit John was taken back to the beginning of the first 666 years of the Jewish dispensation; to give an outline of that typical economy from Abraham to David, and also of the constituted dynasty of the prophets from David to the Babylonish captivity. The constitution of the hierarchy of God of those periods, is what is revealed; and in the remaining part of the preface, in the fifth chapter, the constitution of the Christian Church.

1 *After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice that I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.*

2 *And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.*

3 *And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.*

4 *And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment: and they had on their heads crowns of gold.*

5 *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices : and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

6 *And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal : and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.*

7 *And the first living creature was like a lion, and the second living creature was like a calf, and the third living creature had a face as a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.*

8 *And the four cherubim had each of them six wings about him ; and they were full of eyes within : and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

9 *And when those seraphim give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,*

10 *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*

11 *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power : for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

I am now explaining this prophecy as revealing seven periods, or dispensations of 666 years, from the time of the calling of Abraham to the end of 4,662 years. And these prefaces to the regular histories are of themselves an outline of ecclesiastical history, or a revelation of the constitution of the Churches, or economies to which they are prefaces. Thus, in this preface in the fourth chapter is a plain setting forth of the constitution of the Mosaic economy. The command, "Write the things which

thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter" (i. 19), is obeyed. The things which John had seen in the three of the first of the seven candlesticks, were those really seen by the eye of sense, and of history, in the three periods of 666 years of the Jewish dispensation. "*Write the things which thou hast seen;*" and thus, as I have said, this prophecy dates from the calling of Abraham; the mystical seven of it is of the whole of Revelation. And this preface in this fourth chapter is a preface to the Mosaic dispensation, and to the prophets, the next 666 years. While the fifth chapter proclaims the want of a complete Revelation during the last 666 years of that dispensation, and ushers in the Christian dispensation, when this entire prophecy was given by God *through His Angel, Christ*; and all creation joins in an anthem of thanksgiving for the Divine gift. But it is remarkable that, although the prefaces give an outline of the constitutions of the dispensations then in the past, the codicils to the regular histories do in no way relate to the past, but open in the beginning of the Christian era, and reveal what was then in the future.

It is more than probable some little time intervened between giving the charges to the seven Churches, and the time when these visions of the seven same periods were again given. John had had time to consider the first; and the second Revelation is perfectly distinct.

"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven:" a new phenomenon fell upon the sight of the translated seer, the long roll of history must again pass before him. This door opened was the great door of Gospel grace opened to the world by the call of Abraham, and the Jewish

typical economy. This door of the true Church of Christ, to those who enter it by repentance, and a living faith, is one with the door of eternal life: "Enter in through the gates into the city" (xxii. 14); into the eternal city. "I am the door: by Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." And I say this door of Divine office, and of heaven, was opened to the world again after the flood by the calling of Abraham; that was constitutionally so: it was always open. "God preached the Gospel to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. iii. 8.) "Before Abraham was, I am." (John viii. 58.) The "I am," God in Christ, the Saviour of the world, was from all eternity. He had said to the Church of Philadelphia, "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth. Behold, I have set before thee an open door." Which is rooted in Isaiah xxii. 22, where the office of Christ as High Priest was prefigured by Eliakim, and His kingdom by the priestly and spiritual government of the elders. He is the Head of the Church in all ages; and the times and the seasons are in His hand. How many times has the door of Divine office been opened and shut since the time of Abraham? how many calls have been heard since then? Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, Peter. "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." "Woe unto you lawyers" (doctors of the moral law), "for ye have taken away the key of knowledge." That was the key of the knowledge of Christ, of His Gospel, the only door of heaven. "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold . . . the same is a thief and a robber."

"And the *first* voice that I heard was as it were of a trumpet

talking with me, which said, 'Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.'" This was the Jewish trumpet; as the Jewish Sabbath and all assemblies were ushered in by a trumpet, and as the alarm of war was sounded by a trumpet, so John was called by a trumpet to write the things of that first economy. The trumpet marks the period. It was also the trumpet of prophecy: "Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like God?" And thus it was Christ named *John* and *James* "Boanerges:" the son of thunder. "I will show thee things which must be hereafter." This is the prerogative of the Omniscient God alone. "The things which shall be hereafter," were of those to be written.

"And immediately I was in the Spirit;" that was, in a state wholly spiritual. Without doubt that state is in us, and about us, and we have only to drop the material and the animal, to be in the spiritual; but John, like some others, was translated before death.

"And, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne." This was the throne of the Deity in the Holy of holies of the Jewish economy. It was His throne set upon earth; the government was His: the high priest was only the administrator of His will. (Exod. xxv. 22.) If my reader will turn to the voice of God to Moses and Aaron, to see how He spoke to them from the most holy place, he will see in a moment the meaning of this voice to John, when the glory of the Lord had filled the tabernacle. . . . The Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying (Exod. xli. 34; Lev. i. 1; iv. 1—2; vi. 1; viii. 1; xi. 1; xii. 1; xiii. 4; xiv. 1; xv. 1; xvii. 1; xviii. 1; xix. 1; xx. 1;

xxi. 1; xxii. 1.) And so throughout the Mosaic economy. Heaven, throughout this book, does represent the community of God's people; and earth, the world in opposition to them, or the people without the pale of the true Church.

"And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." These transparent precious stones were simply emblematical of the moral glory of the Divine nature; as Ezekiel said, "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." (i. 28.) The rainbow was the symbol of the everlasting covenant, the bow of promise of a Messiah. The verse seems to refer particularly to the beginning of the covenant age, to the Patriarchal period. "The bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature." (Gen. ix. 16.) The natural bow was a symbol of the covenant of grace. But to the entire Jewish economy pertained the adoption and the covenants; so that the rainbow marks the period.

But God is still in covenant with His people; God the Holy Ghost will be revealed in His Almighty power and majesty, even as God the Redeemer has been revealed. And therefore when I have explained this chapter in my first interpretation of the Apocalypse, as revealing the constitution of the Christian Church, the antitype of the type, it is a perfectly just and true interpretation, for we see in it the type and the antitype; and the bow of promise is still a symbol of the covenant of the Spirit.

"And round about the throne were four-and-twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four-and-twenty elders sitting, clothed

in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold." These seats represent seats of judgment, and the four-and-twenty elders the civil power, or the council of the Jewish nation mentioned by Christ. (Matt. v. 22.) In the prophecy of Ezekiel we see the same, with the Sanhedrim, when it had become corrupted by alliance with Imperial Rome. (xi. 1, 2; viii. 11, 12.) As the third verse of this fourth chapter in the Revelation is rooted in that vision, it was natural that the civil, yet spiritual constitution, should be seen to be the same. The white raiment is an emblem of the purity of justice in the Divine government: and the crowns signify the Divine authority given by God; the spiritual body is ruling in His name, and representing His supremacy.

"And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God." These lightnings and thunderings represent the arrows and thunders of the law under *that* dispensation; the unsheathed sword of justice under the economy of the law, which we well understand as we read the execution of Divine justice. (Josh. vii. 24, 25; Num. xv. 32, 33.) The seven lamps are the lamps of the tabernacle and of the temple. (Exod. xxv. 27; xxxvii. 23; Num. viii. 2.) They typified the seven spirits of God of the seven periods, or, as the antitype is revealed, "Which are the seven spirits of God."

"And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal." These visions are laid in the courts of the tabernacle and the ancient temple; and this sea of crystal is the brazen laver of the one, and the molten sea of the other. (Exod. xxx. 18—28; lx. 7—11; 2 Chron. iv. 2, 4, 6.)

and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind." The word in this verse, ζῶον, in our version translated "beast," is a most unfortunate rendering of the true meaning. They are the same beings as the Seraphim of Isaiah, and the Cherubim of Ezekiel; their holy fervour is the same, their adoration of the Deity on the throne of His glory is the same. (Isa. vi. 2-3; Ezek. i.; x.) The four are the representatives of the four elements of the Scriptures, particularly of the prophets; so that this vision, given to the seals, gives us also the outline of the 666 years of the church under the government of the prophets. The figures, the four representative angels, were from the two cherubim which stood at the entrance of the most holy place, and covered the throne with their wings to veil the glory of God. (Exod. xxv. 18-20; 1 Kings vi. 23-28; 2 Chron. iii. 10.) And just so the glory of God veiled in His Word by the human instrument. The cherubim of Ezekiel were sometimes called "living creatures." In this book of the Revelation these beasts, which are the living creatures of Ezekiel, are sometimes called angels,—meaning messengers, or sent ones. (vii. 1; ix. 14.) If they had been so named throughout, their identity with the cherubim and seraphim of the ancient Scriptures would have been understood. I shall henceforth use these names, angels, cherubim, or living creatures,—when I come to the four beasts. We must not forget that in this book of the Revelation they represent the whole of the Scriptures, or sacred writings, the New Testament with the Old: God is incarnate in His Word, and they are His spokesmen. The eye of the Eternal Spirit of God is in every word of the Revelation." (Rev. v. 6; 2 Chron. xvi. 9; Zech. iv. 10.)

Does not every passage search the heart and try the reins of the children of men? By Revelation we see with the eyes of God; like Him, we can look into the future, and back into a past eternity. (Prov. viii. ; Rev. xiii. 8.) And this evidences Him to be the author of the holy volume.

“And the first living creature was like a lion, and the second living creature was like a calf, and the third living creature had a face as a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.”

It will be seen in a moment that the forms of these cherubim are the same as of those in Ezekiel (i. 10), simply the forms borne on the standards of the tribes of Israel. The standard of the tribe of Judah was a lion; of Ephraim, an ox; of Reuben, a man; and of Dan, an eagle. And God thus gave the same forms to those cherubim, the representatives of the inspired penmen, to show that He Himself, the Lord of hosts, enthroned in His word, is still the Leader and Commander of His people by it, in human agents. St. Peter says, “The Word of God, which liveth, and abideth for ever.” (1 Peter i. 25.) And Christ said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” (John vi. 64.) God is in His word; or, as Ezekiel explains the subject, “The spirit of the living creature was in them” (x. 15—17), and the Apostolic Church is the standard-bearer of that word. In the v. 5, we read, “*The Lion of the tribe of Juda* hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof,” referring to this form of a lion on this cherubim, proving that the forms on the ancient standards are what is meant. Christ was of the tribe of Juda, and the life laid down in His own blood was the purchase-price of the Spirit back to the hearts of men, and He there inspired the Word.

"And the four cherubim, or living creatures, had each of them six wings about him ; and they were full of eyes within : and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

Wings were the known emblem of protection, and so these six wings are emblems of Almighty protection over the Divine element within, of which the sacred writers are the depositaries : "The cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another ; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark, and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee." (Exod. xxv. 20—21.) And as the seraphim or human instruments are seen to employ their wings in Isaiah, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne. . . . And above it stood the seraphim : each one had six wings ; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly." (vi. 2.) I say this reveals to us their humility, adoration, and zeal in the Divine cause with which they are intrusted ; and is not this the attitude of prostration, of reverence, and of love of all the sacred writers ? "Full of eyes within," means, the eye of the eternal Spirit of God in every writer, in the inner spiritual constitution of the word, as in the 6th verse.

"And they rest not day and night." This proves that these are not celestial beings, that the vision is not one of heaven, for there is no *night* there. (xxi. 25 ; xxii. 5.) But the Church militant has her nights,—nights of affliction, and nights of darkness ; and then it is the sacred penmen do not rest ; she ransacks them for alleviation and light, and in her days of

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victory and of glory she goes to them for her songs of praise and thanksgiving: they never rest.

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty:" all the sacred writers do thus proclaim God holy. I might point out ten thousand passages in which they do so (Exod. xxviii. 36; Luke i. 32); and the Church takes up the anthem, and in her beautiful *Te Deum Laudamus*, protracts the strain, and proclaims Him holy, and Almighty as the consequence of His holy nature. Intrinsic holiness is power without limitation, and eternal; and hence the grand vantage-ground of the Supreme Being. It is the most satisfactory thing in the world to shut the eye of sense, and with the eye of the Spirit here revealed—to see God holy; it is the foundation of all our hope: and this is why His one dealing with His true people is to show Himself to them holy. "The Holy One" was His name in Israel. And hence this further proclamation, "Which was, and is, and is to come." The Creator was "The Holy One." (Isa. x. 20; xxix. 19.) The Redeemer was "The Holy One." (Ps. xvi. 10; Luke iv. 34; i. 35; Acts iii. 14.) And the Holy Ghost is the name given to the great Restorer, who "Is to come." "Behold, I make all things new" (xxi. 5); and so the one eternal God will again come, and be manifest as the Restorer, even as He has been manifested in the Creator and Redeemer. As I have said, these proclamations of God, of Himself as He "which was, and is, and is to come," are rooted in the name Jehovah: "He who shall be."

Some have thought that these figures on the standards of the tribes were symbols of creation, of all the Creator's works under His dominion; and hence this universal adoration of the Supreme Being.

“And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

“The four-and-twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and power : for thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.” The sublime Benedicite, *Omnia Opera* of our Church service, is supposed to have been sung by the three Hebrew children in the burning, fiery furnace ; and I believe it was,—for these verses, in this preface to the seals, seem to authorize it (iv. 9 ; v. 13) ; which last verse I shall notice later. But that surpassing sublime anthem, the Benedicite, should be read here, and this song of the universe would be better comprehended.

But although I have said, these four “living creatures” may represent creation, still there is analogy between nature and grace ; and hence they are also the representatives of the spiritual creation, “The Word of God.”

CHAPTER V.

THIS chapter is the remainder of the preface to the seals ; and it carries us on through an outline of the Christian dispensation ; the preface is so constructed.

1 *And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals.*

2 *And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof ?*

3 *And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.*

4 *And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.*

5 *And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not : behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*

6 *And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*

7 *And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.*

8 *And when he had taken the book, the four cherubim and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of*

them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

9 *And they sang as it were a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;*

10 *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

11 *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the cherubim and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands:*

12 *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

13 *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.*

14 *And the four cherubim, or living creatures, said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*

Let it be remembered I am now explaining this prophecy as revealing seven dispensations of 666 years, from the time of Abraham to the end of 4662.

In the first verse of this fifth chapter we see God in the Holy of Holies of the Jewish Sanctuary, with the book of Revelation in His hand, with the roll of prophecy in His hand, ready "To show unto His servants things which must shortly come to

pass," or the history of life's short day; for what were those seven periods in His sight? "As yesterday when it is passed, and as a watch in the night." (Ps. xc. 4.)

"A book written within and on the back side," is language simply rooted in the ancient custom of writing prophecy upon parchments, which were preserved in rolls, and most likely written within and without. But the expression has a mystical meaning, which the roll so written very fitly represented; the letter of the word and the spiritual element of it; the figurative language and its spiritual analogy. When the prophecy of Ezekiel was to be given, the same double meaning was revealed. "Behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book therein; and He spread it before me; and it was written within and without; and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe." (ii. 9, 10.)

"Sealed with *seven* seals." As God then sat there enthroned in His glory, the future of the world's history after the flood was "sealed." He had said He would not again destroy everything, as He had done; but in the mind of the people there was doubt and misgiving. In the act of the Babel builders we see this: they thought to make a way to heaven, so as to escape any more like calamities. And so, even before the flood came, and when it had subsided, the Spirit of God began to move upon the hearts of His prophets, and by type He began to speak to His people of seven periods more to come: "Of every *clean* beast thou shalt take to thee by *sevens*." (Gen. vii. 2, 3.) They were for sacrifice, as we read later (viii. 20), and typified Christ, the one sacrifice for sin for all, during the seven dispensations. The ark rested on the mountains of Ararat in the *seventh* month. And hence the type of the

Sabbath to all ages: it signifies travail and rest. To the Antediluvians it had the same meaning, for had they and the Jewish Church been faithful to their calling, and had they received Christ wholly, the conflict would have been at an end when He came. In the first 666 years of the Christian era the world might have been subdued, taken, and saved. The receiving of Christ is the turning-point: salvation or condemnation. It will be so in the time that remains of these seven periods of 666 years. If the world receives Him, the world will be won and saved. He is now at the door of its heart knocking: "If any man hear my voice, I will come in to him." These missings of the goal are most melancholy. Thus it is prophecy admits of different interpretations. But be it remembered I am explaining these "*seven seals*" as relating to *seven* periods of 666 years from the time of Abraham. Blessed be God, the goal is still within the reach of the true and hidden Church. God leaves no one hopeless. While there is life there is hope: to the last moment there is hope.

"And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" This strong angel was the Spirit of Inspiration, the Spirit of God, moving upon the hearts of men to create light, the light of life there. See Him thus striving. (Job xix. 23, 24; Dan. x., from verse 5.) The Spirit of Christ could alone do it; He was given, and working in the hearts of men in virtue of Christ's death before He came. And hence the revealed fact,—that "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." The thing was impossible; none but an omniscient being—none but God Himself, through Christ, and by Him, could do this: "In Him

was life, and the life was the light of men." Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. And hence the blessed volume of light and truth we possess: "*I have given them Thy Word.*"

"And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon." John said this of himself, as relating to the Book of the Revelation he was about to receive. But, as relating to the early period, he did then represent the people, who of themselves had no power to open the volume of the future, to read, or even to look thereon. Should we not worship Christ, and the Holy Spirit, God, who now allows us to read, to see clearly what His will is, to understand aright His providential dealings with His people, whereby He is leading them by a right way to a city of habitation? Oh, it is a blessed thing to open the book of life, to read, and to look thereon for ourselves!

"And one of the *elders* saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the *Root* of David hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the *seven* seals thereof." This elder may have been Abraham, or Moses; they were both prophets, and the Spirit of Christ did speak in them. He in them had prevailed to loose the *seven* seals. For now mark what is very remarkable: the elder did not say, the Lamb had done it,—but the Lion of the tribe of Judah,—the standard of the tribe. But then, to reveal the spiritual nature, he added, "The *Root* of David," the offspring had not yet come. He is seen in the next verses, showing how a page of history is passed over, even in this preface to the regular history under the seals. Christ, the everlasting Lord of heaven and earth, had even then prevailed to open the book of the future, to loose its sacred seals.

"And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." We see here how the mind of the Spirit passes on to the Christian dispensation; the fact of the lamb being slain seems still rather in anticipation than as accomplished: "A Lamb as it had been slain." "And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne." This seems rooted in Daniel, "Behold, one like unto the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him." (vii. 13.) In this verse in the Revelation, the Son of God is come, and all things are delivered into His hand, even this Revelation. Horns were symbols of power, and the seven horns were His. "All power is given unto Me, in heaven and in the earth." And the seven eyes which symbolized the Spirit were His, so that the seven Spirits are His. What a sublime picture would this make,—*"The Lamb of God"* taking this book out of the right hand of the Father! and yet I never saw it attempted.

"And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." The Lamb here is the central object, the symbol of Christianity; and hence this offering of the prayers of the saints to Him, and this adoration and laudation of Him. The one sacrifice for sin is the object of worship. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred,

and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth." This "new song" is the Christian anthem that had then superseded the Paschal hymn. (Matt. xxvi. 30.) The worthiness of the Lamb had been the foundation of all the power, and all the gifts He had received ; and here it is made the foundation of this gift of "The Revelation" being given to Him : because He had redeemed us by His blood. Oh, ponderous weight in the balance ! through Him all things are ours. All the promises of God are Yea, and Amen in Christ. By His Spirit, through Him, we are spiritual agents of His grace to others,—kings and priests to God. These designations simply signify degrees in the Divine life.

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." Here the mind of the Spirit simply passes on to a later period in this Christian dispensation ; to these times of great, and still greater increase of adoring worshippers ; of communities, and communities of genuine worshippers in spirit and in truth. How well do we recognize the Christian throng. "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Is not this our song of thanksgiving and praise from day to day, from Sabbath to Sabbath, from generation to generation ? "The Lamb" is the object of our worship, of our song ; and no loftier theme can e'er employ our tongue. These chapters were prophetic of our Christian services. The eye of the world seems almost uplifted to the Lamb. Oh, when shall it rest for ever and ever there ?

every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that hear, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto them that live for ever and ever." I have said before, this verse is noted in what is now called the Benedicite, Omnia Opera, Church service. I believe it was the song of the three angels in the burning fiery furnace, and has been preserved, I suppose, in some of the Apocryphal writings. It is an anthem. In it the whole universe falls down in adoration of the Deity, or rather, rises up to His throne. If we know not its origin, this 13th verse in the Apocalypse must be prophetically written. The anthem is Christianized : "The Redeemer in the slain and ascended Lamb is the object of worship, and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, bless, and honour, and glorify Him. The four representatives of the Word of God said, "Amen," and have said these four living creatures as much represent the spiritual world as they do creation. "And the four-angels fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever." Spiritual and physical nature are vocal with praises of the Jehovah God ; of the Creator, Redeemer, and they magnify His holy name.

It closes the preface to the seals : as I have said, it is an introduction of the history under the *seven* ; and hence this universal God, bringing us down to the time of the end. Such adoration and thanksgiving, and glory, and honour, is, and ever will be, the result of Revelation. Such adoration and worship ever will be, for the precious gift.

CHAPTER VI.

IN this chapter, under the *seven* seals, is revealed the regal and imperial enemy of the seven periods of 666 years, under the mythological religion of Rome, by the Roman Augur, whose office it was to prognosticate or foretell future events, by omens from birds, prodigies, etc., etc., etc.

1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals ; and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four living creatures or cherubim, saying, Come and see.

2 And I saw, and behold a white horse ; and he that sat on him had a bow ; and a crown was given unto him ; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

To understand this vision we must picture to ourselves John in Patmos, a prisoner, under the inhibition of the world's despot. Overwhelmed in darkness and despair, under the power and oppression of Rome, he would know what would be the ultimate result of that state of things,—what the future of that dominating power, what the final destiny of the Church of Christ, and what the end of the opposing kingdom of darkness, of Satan ; and so Christ appeared to him a second time to give him a distinct history of the regal enemy of the Church, and of the Apostate woman, the corrupt Church ; which last history is

under the seven trumpets, but *of the same period*, as this of the regal enemy. And again, to reveal the seven vials, which close these same seven periods of 666 years. For be it remembered, this is now my theory of interpretation. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." John had, indeed, seen the things of the three periods of the Jewish dispensation, although in the past, as the three candlesticks removed exhibited,—still they were fresh in the memory of man: "which thou hast *seen*," might be almost literally said. And the present, the things of Rome, and the passing away of the Jewish economy, which John then saw; and the things which should be hereafter, which he much desired to know, and wept much, because there was no man able to open to him the sealed page, or to look thereon. I say, in this dilemma, Christ appeared to John, and gave him *again* the entire history of the seven periods of 666 years, more defined and lucidly drawn, or revealed. In the beginning of the preface to these seals we have read, "After this I looked," after the entire history had been once given under the *seven Churches*: now an entire new phenomenon appears, as there does throughout this book, when John says, "After that I looked." (xv. 5; xvi. 1.) And the entire absence of the little conjunction, "and" (iv. 1), which links together the seven Churches; and the entire chain of history throughout this second edition of the Prophecy, evidences the fact that the same history is again revealed. It begins independently, as does the history of the Churches. "After this I looked:" no "and," to mark any connection.

We have already seen the visions in Patmos rooted in the services of the ancient temple, in the religion of Jehovah, the

one true God. The scenes thus laid in that ancient worship, are, as I have shown, the spiritual things of the Kingdom of God, perhaps presented to John by the force of memory, or association with that typical system; and we shall see this to the end of the book. Then how natural was it, when this regal enemy was to be revealed to him, to the world, that God should do so by the forms and rites of the Pagan religion, that stronghold of the devil from the beginning of time down to the period when John wrote. And this is just what we find in this vision; the arch-enemy of Christ, and of His Church, is revealed by a Roman sign, with which, beyond all doubt, John was quite familiar, and with which, from classical history, the world will ever be familiar. There was nothing more known at Rome than the College of Augurs, the office of whose members was to foretell future events; they had greater exemptions and privileges than any other religious order in Rome. They were first created by Romulus, to the number of three: "he was himself a noted augur." Servius Tullius added a fourth, and the tribunes of the people increased the number to nine, 450 years before Christ. And hence it is very probable the prophecy in Zechariah was rooted in the same. (i. 8; x. 11; xviii. 19.) Sylla added six more Augurs during his Dictatorship. The chief amongst them was called *Magister Collegii*. Of the five principal things from which they drew omens, I need only mention one,—the one that at once explains to us the meaning of this vision, and I think also of the vision in Zechariah. "The fourth was from quadrupeds,—from their crossing, or reappearing in some unaccustomed place. From such superstitious notions did the Romans draw their prophecies." So ancient, large, and nationally recognised a body as that, one held in such super-

stitious reverence by the people, would be sure to be well known to St. John, living as he had ever done under the dominion of Rome. And thus it was Christ spake to him by these four-footed beasts crossing the untrodden Isle of Patmos; and as they are here seen carrying the foul fiend of hell, then incarnate in the Pagan enemy. But John was not only to see the rise of that enemy in the opening of the first seal, but his history, his downfall, and his end. In the xvii. 3—5, the same Roman Antichrist is revealed by the same Pagan mythological sign.

But I have said this mystical number seven takes us back to the beginning of the seven periods of 666 years,—to the time of the calling of Abraham; and therefore we must go back and date this history under the first seal from that time.

“And I saw, when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four living creatures, saying, Come and see.” The high prerogative to give this prophecy to the world, was God’s alone, and through the Lamb he did so; and thus the Lamb is here made the revealer of the future; but still through human agents, as is explained in the first verse of the book. “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him. . . . And He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John:” here are the three agents,—God, the Lamb, and John,—the representative of the Church, and of the inspired penman. And so in this verse to the opening of the seals: here is God, “The root of David,” in the Lamb; and the four cherubim, seraphim, or living creatures the representatives of creation and of spiritual creation.

The noise as of thunder when one seal was broken, was to announce prophecy, as thunder was the known symbol of prophecy. (x. 4.) “The Lord thundered from heaven, and

the most High uttered His voice." (2 Sam. xxii. 14; Job xl. 9.) And I have shown this was why our Lord named John, Boanerges,—the son of thunder. When this Divine announcement had been made, one of the cherubim, angels, or representatives of inspiration, said, "Come and see:" he was made the exhibitor, or revealer of the things to be seen. It might have been St. John himself, although the four do represent the Old Testament and the New; as the four prophets represented all the minor prophets, and the four Evangelists all the New Testament writers. As this book of the Revelation is rooted in the ancient Scriptures, we do understand the spiritual alliance, or oneness of the order: "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests; *and we shall reign on the earth.*" The community is a spiritual one and its functions are Divine.

"And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer." A white horse was the known emblem of conquest; and I have said this vision was from the rites of Roman augury, from one which was well known,—a quadruped crossing, or appearing in some unaccustomed place. The being who is here seen to sit upon this white horse is a regal enemy, the *crown* notifies this; but the spiritual enemy is Satan himself, a usurper, a pretender, and a *deceiver* (xx. 10); for perhaps in this character he is a greater deceiver than in any other. Darts and arrows were the known symbols of enemies and death; and thus it is Satan is here represented with a bow. But I think the bow may also represent the vagrant tribes of the Arabians, from the generations of Cain, Ham, Ishmael, and so downwards, "a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." (Gen. iv. 12.) And of

the sons of Ham we read, "Cush was a mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel. . . . Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh." (x.)

The Canaanites were from this evil generation, and thus do we understand this crown given to this rider with a bow: and he went forth conquering and to conquer. In the dynasty of the Pharaohs he did this; and the regal power of the Canaanites was one of the greatest wonders of the world. My reader should read here, Gen. x. 6—20; Josh. ix., x., xi., xii., he would see what a gigantic power this regal enemy was. It must be remembered that this period, according to my present interpretation, is the first 666 years of the Jewish dispensation, from Abraham to David. The generations of Ishmael are included in it; and this further explains the bow of the enemy, and of the spiritual foe: "He will be a wild man, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him." There is no neutral state: those who are not of the generation of the righteous, are of this generation of the wicked; those who are not of the ranks of Christ, are of the ranks of this enemy.

I might place here the history under the *first* trumpet (viii. 7), which is the *ecclesiastical* history of the same 666 years; and also the history under the *first* vial (xvi. 2),—the destruction of the Canaanitish nations; and the history of that period would be seen to be complete. But I shall follow the Divine arrangement of the prophecy, and its constitution will be evidenced.

3 *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second cherubim say, Come and see.*

4 *And there went out another horse that was red: and power*

was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another : and there was given unto him a great sword.

Perhaps it was the custom of the ancient augurs, when they had drawn their omens, thus to call to the persons who had come to consult, them, "Come and see," and hence these striking official summonses of this vision. One of the things from which they drew their omens was the phenomena of the heavens, such as thunder, lightning, comets, etc., and hence, perhaps, the first appeal by thunder : "Come and see." (vi. 1.)

I would have my reader notice well the train of evil in this vision : how it increases and is developed ; it in no way dies out, but germinates and gives birth to offspring in succeeding generations. The usurper once in power proceeds from one abuse of it to another. The crown under the last seal was an omen of the future, an ominous warning to those whose hearts were in rebellion against God. Then follows this red horse, which was the known emblem of bloody war. "And power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another." Is not this the Satanic economy of the nations of the earth ? What is the cause of war, but pride, ambition, aggression, oppression, envy, jealousy, love of supremacy ? If the world, like the apostles when great grace was upon them all, said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but were content to have alike all things common (Acts iv. 32—34 ; ii. 44, 45), there would be none to take peace from the earth, none to kill each other.

This page of history extends from "David until the carrying away into Babylon." (Matt. i. 17.) And thus do we well understand this "horse that was red." I have said, it is a

regal enemy that is revealed under the seals ; and as we look back into these next 666 years, was not the world in arms under this absolutely monarchical government ; internal wars, and bloody wars with foreign monarchical powers marked the period, even to the destruction of Jerusalem by the great Assyrian power. How terrible were the sufferings of the last people from the dynasty of the Nebuchadnezzars ; and also from the Syrian power. But the affliction originated in their own rebellious hearts ; they began to be ashamed of the Divine government, and would have a king like all the nations of the earth, whereas their community was of heaven, and should have acknowledged Divine rule. Let us look at the real state of the case as it was recorded for our guidance. "All the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and said to Samuel, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee : for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." St. Peter said, "Ye are a peculiar people," living under the Divine government. The government of "the Word of God" is our grand feature ; and that peculiarity we should be proud of, and careful to preserve intact, and not wish to be like all the nations of the earth.

"Ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye have chosen you : and the Lord will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people said, Nay ; but we will have a king over us ; that we also may be like all the nations. And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king." (1 Sam. viii., xii.) Here God's word upon the subject was plain and positive, and should have been

absolute with the people ; but they rejected His government, as the world ever has done since a temporal crown was given to the devil. God suffered them to have their own blind, beguiled, wilful way,—to have a king,—and was very long suffering and merciful to them in their rebellion ; but the sufferance was a scourge from Him, and thus that corrupt dynasty ended in what it could only end in, dissolution. Now let us look at these verses, and we shall find the true key to them in the history of those 666 years, from Samuel down to the Captivity.

A red horse was the known emblem of bloody war ; and he who sat upon this horse was this regal enemy, and I think not of the Pagan world only, but also of this usurper of the people of God, who was then in spirit allied with those alien powers who worshipped many gods, and knew nothing of the Providence and the grace of the One true God. And power was given to this regal enemy, or aggrandizer of illegal power, “to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another.” During that period of 666 years, was not this the consequence of rebellion and anarchy against the Divine government ? And is it not that which must ever be ? To take peace from the earth, seems written in opposition to the peace of the reign of Christ, who was rightly designated “The Prince of Peace.” Subjection to Him is inevitable peace. “The wars of the Jews” will remain a proverb to the end of time ; and their wars in that second period of their history, together with the revolutions, and convulsions of surrounding nations, explain to us this element of hell in this red horse, and in the murderous warrior who sat thereon.

“And there was given to him a great sword.” It was usual for the Roman augur to appear with an omen in his hand

and hence all these omens in the hands of these augurs; a crown (which may have been an omen of the Jewish crown—the evil spirit went forth conquering, and to conquer) a sword,—balances,—hell. A sword was the known symbol of destruction (Deut. xxxii. 41, 42), and it may have referred to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, which awful history should be read here (2 Kings xxiv., xxv.); or it may have been ominous of those wars that never ceased till the final destruction of the holy city. That “city of the great King” (Pa. xlviii. 21: Matt. v. 35), was many times besieged, stormed, and taken by the enemy, but the Eternal city stands still, and is impregnable against the enemy. She need not fear this great sword.

I might place here the page of *ecclesiastical* history under the *second* trumpet (viii. 8), and the temporal *kingdom* of Israel would be seen cast into the Divine element of spiritual government as a scourge: and I might add also the *second* vial (xvi. 3), and that same Divine element would be seen to become blood, which was the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; but I prefer following the Divine arrangement of the Prophecy.

5 *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third cherubim say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.*

6 *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four cherubims say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see that thou hurt not the oil and wine.*

I have shown that the being revealed under these seals is a regal enemy, and the period under this third seal is, “From the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ,” the last 666

years of the Jewish dispensation. Then this being here revealed must be the Roman power, or perhaps the spiritual enemy may include several powers existing in that period. We must remember the four beasts of Daniel,—the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, with four heads which foretold the division of the empire to four of the officers of Alexander,—the fourth, Rome, the revelation of whom was terrible: "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." (vii. 7.) This chapter should be read here. "The Son of Man" is seen to come in the reign of this beast, and to receive His kingdom from the Father. The eleventh chapter might also be read; a long history of the spiritual enemy is there given. Some suppose it is principally of the Syrian power; which was almost in constant wars with the Jews from the time of David to the time of Christ, when Syria became a Roman province. Antiochus Epiphanes destroyed Jerusalem, and was so cruel to the Jews, that they called him Epimanes, or furious; his profane acts were those of a madman. But I think Rome is clearly the power here revealed. The honour of building a city was disputed between Romulus and his brother Remus, so that they had recourse to the custom of deciding by augurs, which were common in Italy before their time; the decision was given in favour of Romulus, so he began to build, and called the city Rome: of which he became king. It is supposed this occurred about 753 years before Christ; but the kingdom was very poor and small, and the city only a collection of huts, so that it could

not have become a power of any importance before this cardinal prophetic era, 666 years before Christ. Let us look at this vision under this third seal from this aspect.

“And when he had opened the *third* seal,”—the page of history in the third period of the Jewish dispensation,—“I heard the *third* cherubim say, Come and see.” It was literally the *third* prophetic seer, as I have shown from Daniel, who called to the Church and to the world, to come and see that fourth beast rising into power; or, that Roman power rising into temporal glory, surpassing anything before it. And it is very remarkable that after the opening of the *fourth* seal there is no more the voice of the cherubim saying, “Come and see.” Because when the New Testament and this book of the Revelation were written there was no other sacred penman to come forth; the remaining period to the end of time was revealed under the fourth voice. Thus down to the fourth period each one proclaimed the present and revealed the future.

“And I beheld, and lo a black horse.” A black horse was the known emblem of calamity and death; the augurs would have pronounced it to be so. And if we remember what lay beneath that seal, in the future, during those 666 years,—war, destruction, and abject subjection to Rome,—we do understand this black horse and this regal enemy here revealed.

“And he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.” These balances in the hand of this rider upon the black horse are again an *omen* of the future, just as we have seen a crown given to the first Augur, and a great sword to the second: it was usual for them to appear with such omens. Throughout this prophecy we shall thus see each page of history close with an omen, voice, or prophecy of the future,—even the proclama-

tion of the great judgment day, under the *seventh* trumpet, and the *seventh* vial.

Balances were the known symbols of Divine justice and judgment. (Dan. v. 27 ; Ezek. v. 1 ; xlv. 9, 10.) So that this augur was a minister of justice, and this omen in his hand foretold the execution of justice. Upon whom was justice executed ? Upon Christ. Justice in its most bare, naked claim, could demand no more than He paid to it. God had said, "I will in no wise justify the guilty," but now He can be just, and the justifier of the weakest believer. The whole human family had been weighed in the balances and found wanting ; but Christ fulfilled the law, not only to the very letter, but He fulfilled it according to the divine love of His own nature ; and then gave us His Spirit to help us to fulfil it also. "And his blood atoned for the sin of all." "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." (Zech. xiii. 7 ; Isa. liii.) Thus did the inspired penman say, "Come and see." But the *omen* in the hand of the augur foretold an event in the future beyond the term which the black horse represented. Satan incarnate in Rome was that minister of justice, and the crucifixion of our Lord occurred in the fourth period of 666 years. Isaiah xl. should be read here. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned : *for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.*" This could only have been said of the vial of divine wrath poured upon Christ. He did suffer the penalty of the sin of the world.

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah ? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in

the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

"Wherefore art thou red in thy apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." (lxiii.) Did not the seraphim and the cherubim say, Come and see; and did not the balances tell of the demand of justice that Christ only could meet? The history of Satan accusing Job to God should be read with this vision of this exaction of justice.

"And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." This voice is the voice of the Spirit of God from the Inspired Word, as Ezekiel said: The spirit of the living creature was in the wheels (x. 17),—in the ever-revolving, operating machinery,—the Word. Here, in the Revelation, that Spirit proclaims aloud that the granary of the Gospel of Christ is opened afresh, that neither the black horse of death nor the strong arm of eternal justice has curtailed it: a most liberal supply is still in store, and may be had for a merely nominal price. And the command is imperative, that the wine and the oil may not be hurt. These were all emblems of the Gospel feast; and Isa. xxv. 6 should be read with it. "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. . . . He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces." The voice was a prophecy of the increase of inspiration, of the New Testament. Did not, and do not the waters of life gush

forth from the Divine fountain of the four Evangelists—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,"—and from all the Epistles? Was not wheat, barley, oil, and wine, more abundant than they had ever been? Although it had before been said, "Come ye, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

This verse, or proclamation of plenty under this third seal, was a prophecy, even as the balances were an omen; as I have said, we shall now hear such prophetic voices at the end of each history to the end of the book.

I might place here the *ecclesiastical* history under the *third* trumpet (viii. 10, 11), of the same 666 years, and the third vial; and this page of history would be complete: but I prefer to follow the Divine arrangement of the Prophecy.

7 *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth cherubim say, Come and see.*

8 *And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

These calls from the inspired penman to come and see are very striking, for they were not more made to John than to every individual in all ages. Christ has opened to us the vista of the future (1 Peter i. 11); and it is His own Spirit that is thus ever calling to us to come and see. And yet there is not one in a million who heeds His call; the habitual habit of the public mind is to be listless, and heedless; to despise prophecy as a thing of naught. And still His voice is unceasing, and His cry urgent, "Come and see."

"And I looked." As I have said before, this expression never occurs in this book without a new and striking phenomenon immediately appearing. "And behold a pale horse." A pale horse was the known emblem of famine, misery, and death. "And his name that sat on him was Death." This being is Imperial Rome, during 666 years, from the time of the birth of Christ, to the end of these 666 years. I am quite aware Rome began to decline long before this, but this was the period at which it changed its form from the Imperial to the Papal government. "And Hell followed with him." This was the Papal power into which the Imperial transformed itself. "Hell" is here the *omen* in the hand of the augur, as the crown, the great sword, and the balances were in the hands of the augurs under the three last seals. Let us glance at this ominous page of history as it is now fulfilled.

The "pale horse." We know how Rome reduced nations to subjection by pillage, the force of arms, overpowering might, and the most deadly slaughter by millions: the final destruction of Jerusalem came within this period; the appalling history of which by Josephus, should be read here. That Imperial power was, indeed, a beast of prey that ravaged nations to satisfy its covetous desires, and glotated itself with blood to satisfy its appetite for blood. The capital had enriched itself with spoils and treasures from every nation by robbery; and in the time of Augustus it was fifty miles in circuit, its walls were entered by thirty-seven gates, and it contained four millions of inhabitants. The empire was also splendid for its arts and sciences, and carried them into other parts of the world. Satan, in that power, was then transformed into an angel of light, and, in the climax of that glory, he showed Christ all the kingdoms of the

world, and the glory of them ; and said unto Him, " All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." But the world was to be taken by other means,—by spiritual conquests over the hearts of men. The gorgeous capital,—with its beautiful statues from Greece, obeliaks and columns from Egypt, costly manufactures from Asia, gold, silver, and precious stones from every part of the world,—could not tempt Him. The empire was built upon a wrong foundation, and Christ knew that it must fall, and that great would be its fall. Suffice it here to say of this pale horse, that the thousands who died in dungeons, in irons, and of starvation,—in siege, in wars and destructions,—in the chains of captivity, exile, and slavery,—in cruel barbarous tortures and crucifixions, under that power, were the fulfilment of its ominous appearance. The catacombs of Rome witness of the deaths of the early Christians ; to say nothing of the thousands who were burned alive, or flung to the wild beasts of its amphitheatre.

In this land of liberty, and in the happy age we live, it is difficult to realize all these horrors of the past ; but the mind should endeavour to do so, that by firm adherence to truth the same may never by any possibility be enacted over again.

" And his name that sat on him was Death ;" that was, the evil spirit in his true, native, and essential nature. " The destroyer," the " murderer from the beginning." (John viii. 40, 44.) " The Son of man " fell beneath his bludgeon ; but, in the deadly onslaught the Incarnate God conquered even " death," and we are all conquerors through Him. This being is old mortality. But Christ says He has the key, even to the natures of these two agents, hell and death (Rev. i. 18) ; which key is His own Spirit, nature, or the Spirit of God, and by Him

He will swallow up even this enemy, "Death," in victory. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But we must remember that this being, "Death," was Imperial Rome: we know the black catalogue of names. After the death of Augustus Cæsar, in 350 years there were thirty-six Emperors of Rome; we know some of their dark deeds of atrociousness and of blood. The Imperial enemy was a manifestation of the nature of the devil,—of "death,"—engulfing all in death. In Rev. xii. 3, he is called "a great red dragon," because he was standing ready to devour the infant Jesus. In that power the enemy of God and of souls was exhibited to the world. Christ several times called him "The Prince of this world," referring to his proud, arrogant spirit, and to his spirit of self-glorification and of aggrandizement. All the glory of the world he then possessed could only end in his own fell nature, dissolution, "death." In the end of this prophecy (xx. 14) these two agents, death and hell, are seen cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. (xx. 14.)

"And Hell followed with him." I have said this was the omen in the hand of the augur, and referred to Papal Rome of the next 666 years,—or, as it were, followed with him; for they were the same spiritual enemy, but under another form, the better to deceive. This history is later in this prophecy, under the trumpets; as I have said, the "hell" here mentioned is the omen.*

* These omens do relate to the seals, but we must remember the deeds of the Romish Antichrist are seen under the next seal, the Imperial enemy having become defunct.

"And power was given to *them* over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." Such as were the works of the first power, such were the works of the second. The same fell destroyer was in both,—the murderer from the bottomless pit. (ix. 11.) I need not here go through again the works of the second of these agents, as it would only be a repetition of what I have said of the first. We can now look back at both, and see in them the deeds here foreshown: they did kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and with the beasts of the earth; that is, killed the saints as the beasts of the earth. The whole will never be conceived of till Babylon shall be laid open at the last great day. (xviii. 24.) If this prophecy be harrowing, and the facts more so, what will the exposure be then?

"Over the fourth part of the earth" may mean literally over one quarter of the globe; not over Europe particularly, but over about one quarter of the whole earth. In the time of Augustus the Roman empire embraced all the nations of Europe, except a few northern tribes who maintained their independence. It included England, France, Spain, part of Germany, all the States of Italy, Greece, the country now occupied by Turkey in Europe, beside many other nations. In Asia, it embraced all the kingdoms from Asia Minor to the west, to India on the east. It included Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Persia, Parthia, and many other countries. It included also the whole portion of Africa, from Mauritania, now Morocco, on the west, to Ethiopia on the east. But, on the other hand, we must remember the great continents then undiscovered,—America, Australia, New Zealand; or, as God said to Job, "Hast thou

perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it at all." I think we may interpret His word in the Apocalypse literally, that Imperial and Papal Rome reigned over the fourth part of the earth.

I might place here the history under the *fourth* trumpet (viii. 12, 13), which is the *ecclesiastical* history of the same 666 years; and the calamity of the *fourth* vial (xvi. 8, 9); and that period would be seen to be complete: but I shall follow the Divine arrangement of the book.

9 *And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:*

10 *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

11 *And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*

The period under this seal dates from the end of the first 666 years of this dispensation to the end of the second period, the 1,332 years to the time of Wickliff. It will be seen there is no *regal* or Imperial enemy under this seal; the Imperial element was merged in the Papal power, as it is in the codicil to the ecclesiastical history under the trumpet: "the *dragon*," the *regal* enemy, from the dragon of Egypt (Ezek. xxix. 3), "gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." (xiii. 2.) The deeds of this spiritual, Papal enemy, "hell," were foreshewn under the last seal. "Power was given unto *them* over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with

hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." (vi. 8.) Now, under the fifth seal are seen the souls of those who were so killed. "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held:" this may mean a sacrificial altar,—the Pagan altar; for thousands of Christians were burned alive for the testimony they bore to the truth of Christ; and thousands and tens of thousands were killed with sword, hunger, and death, like beasts of the earth. Oh, at what value should we estimate the truth that was preserved to us at such a cost! And if called upon, we must be ready to defend it at the same cost. But this altar may also mean the altar of Christ's body (Heb. xiii. 10), under which are all the spirits of the blessed till the time of the general resurrection of the dead: "Them that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him." But is it not gracious of God to acknowledge the testimony of these faithful "witnesses"?

"And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them *that dwell on the earth*?" Here, the Church militant, and the Church triumphant are literally and absolutely one. "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." I say, this cry to have their blood avenged is of the Church of Christ, of heaven and earth; and do we not still hear her cry, the martyr-cry of the dark ages, till God arose to judge her cause, and to avenge her blood on them that did dwell *on the earth*. "The *earth*" is said here in opposition to the people of God; as heaven throughout the book represents the Church, and the earth the world.

"And white robes were given unto every one of them:" that was, the justifying righteousness of Christ, and His Holy Spirit;

a virtual and an actual holiness. "Having the glory of God." (xxi. 11.)

"And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." As we have seen an omen in the hand of each augur under these seals, so this latter part of this verse is a *prophecy* added to the page of history. Let us look at the period to which it precisely refers. I have said this fifth seal takes us down to the year 1332, to the time of the *calling* of Wickliff, who was born in or about the year 1324. So there can be no doubt but that this prophecy refers to the intervening period between Wickliff and Luther, who was born in or about the year 1483, 159 years later than Wickliff. The light in Wickliff was the dawn of the Reformation; but down to the time of Luther darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people. In those 159 years was the most deadly conflict, including the life of Luther, between the true Church of Christ and the corrupt Rome; it was then the conflict for victory or for final subjugation; thousands upon thousands of martyrs fell in that short period, and hence this *prophecy*, or answer to the souls under the *fifth seal*: "Rest yet for a *little season*, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." I could not have explained this page of prophecy if the key to it had not been put into our hand by Christ Himself, the giver of it. In the codicil to the seals and trumpets (chap. 11), "When they shall have finished their testimony," the two witnesses, or the two Churches of the two 666 years of this Christian dispensation, "the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome

them, and kill them ;" that was, the two Churches of those two periods should apparently be the vanquished ones, overcome and destroyed by the Romish beast ; and was not that period of 159 years, dark, and the darkness almost hopeless : the two bodies of the past were dead. . . . " And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies *three days and an half*, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." I have said, this is a codicil to the *seals and trumpets*, so that under the fifth trumpet is the explanation of this prophecy under the fifth seal. " And after *three days and an half* the spirit of life from God entered into them." Here is the precise explanation of the prophecy under the seal. These three days and an half mean three jubilee periods of fifty years, and a half, twenty-five, making 175 years.

I have shown the period between Wickliff and Luther was 159 years, but we must allow these twenty-five years to the time of the calling of Luther, and the emergence of the Church from her darkness and apparent death. " The spirit of life from God entered into them." Oh, what does this tell us ? That the power is of God,—that we must pray Him to pour upon us the Spirit of grace and supplication ; the gift of the Holy Ghost,—an infinite, free, and sovereign gift ; and that there is no help but from Him. He is able in a moment to send forth His Spirit to seal thousands, and we must hold on fast to this hope of our calling. The Church of Christ is the same in all ages ; she may have her submergences, but He is her life ; her resurrection must ensue. " I am the resur-

rection and the life : He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." The body of the Church of the fifth period was overcome ; and apparently dead, but through Christ she did rise from the dead. As I shall have to go through this codicil in chap. xi. later, I leave it here, having only glanced at it to explain the *prophetic* voice under the *fifth* seal. The voice to the *fifth* Church precisely tallies with this history under the *fifth* seal : "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with Me in white ; for they are worthy." (xiii. 4.)

I might place here the history under the *fifth* trumpet (ver. 9—14),—where spiritually the Romish and Mohammedan Antichrists are one, and revealed as hordes of false teachers. Their history there is of the same period as this vision under the *fifth* seal. I might add also the *fifth* vial, which is seen *poured upon the seat of the beast* (xv. 10—11), which event of history is now in the past, and which we look back upon with thanksgiving and praise that it is so. I say, I might make this arrangement of the history ; but I prefer following the Divine arrangements, or the matter in the codicils would be obscured.

12 *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake ; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.*

13 *And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.*

14 *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together ; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.*

15 *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bonds-*

man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains ;

16 *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb :*

17 *For the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ?*

This page of history we now look back upon in our glorious Reformation ; the period dates from the Lutheran era to the time in which we live, although the seal *represents* the period from Wickliff to the end of the two thousand years of this Christian dispensation. We have seen the intervening period between Wickliff and Luther deducted from the 666 years of Divine light and glory. And now stirring times are abroad, and at the very door, to close this *sixth* period ; for we must remember the startling vision of the seventh chapter lies under the *sixth* seal, only separated by the division of the chapters. The language under this seal is figurative, as is the whole book ; but let us read the figures and we shall see the very events as they occurred.

“And I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake :” an earthquake was the known emblem of great political revolutions (Hag. ii. 6, 7 ; Heb. xii. 27, 28), and this is the meaning here ; all the Papal States were shaken to their centre, there was the convulsion here so graphically described. The monk of Wittemberg stormed and undermined the foundations of the Vatican, and the throne of the Pope, who then had for 750 years sat a Sovereign Pontiff upon that throne. And John said, Lo ; do look, and see the tremendous reverse and overthrow of that spiritual pretender.

"And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." I think this *sun* signifies regal power, because the sun was the known emblem of royalty; or rather royalty was considered as the sun, and worshipped as the sun. One of the meanings of the name of Pharaoh, was sun. So I think this sun under the sixth seal, rather refers to the *kingdoms* that had been Romish, than to the Pope himself. "The moon," represents the corrupt Church: "The moon became as blood,"—engaged in bloody warfare. For we must remember this is not the beginning of the downfall of Papal Rome; the *fifth* vial poured upon the seat of the beast, was the first convulsion in the Papal power: the history we are now going through, is its submergence in the sixth period we live in.

"And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind;" that is, the false teachers of that corrupt system, of that firmament that had been so resplendent in temporal glory, fell from their towering apostacy to the earth, to nought: they were detected as deceivers, and exhibited as wild or blighted fruits, that could not come to maturity. When the mighty wind of heaven passed over them, they fell dried and shrivelled, because they had no life or nourishment from the tree of life.

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together;" that is, the heaven of that corrupt system: the state of being was changed, the darkness of Popery, of night, gave way to the Protestant light and truth. When God said, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. lxx. 17), He spake first of those changing economies, and dynasties—of those regenerations that are ever bringing about the end. Here the corrupt system of Rome in its sovereignty and supremacy

passed away before the pure religion of Christ. "As a scroll when it is rolled together," seems to refer to a roll of prophecy that was fulfilled, and then rolled together as useless.

"And every *mountain* and island were moved out of their places;" that is, every kingdom that had been Romish moved from its foundation and centre of heresy. The words seem rooted in Matt. xvii. 20: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." A mountain was the known emblem of a kingdom; and we must not forget the *horns* on the head of this beast in xiii. 1: ten was a representative number, and signified the kingdoms that were then Romish,—one with the beast. But here every mountain is moved out of its place. "An island," means people (xvii. 15): those of every island, and nation, and tongue who had embraced Popery. And, therefore, we do not know what nations, and kingdoms, and tongues, and peoples may yet be won to the pure faith of Christ, even in the 132 years that remain of this sixth period. I say, stirring times are abroad, and we do not know what may be done. "*Every mountain and island were removed out of their places;*" and, as I say, we have still 132 years for the completion of what has been so nobly done.

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to

and?" Here is a vivid description of the immediate coming of the Lord to judgment; and I have no doubt but it refers to the culminating point of the world's history, and is a *prophecy* of the end of that page of history, as at the end of each page we have seen such prophecies and omens; but here it is of the great judgment-day. "The wrath of the *Lamb*:" of the great sacrifice for sin. Justice without mercy will never be felt fully, till that great day; but who can conceive what it will then be,—mercy turned to justice; the proffer of pardon and peace, condemnation and eternal punishment! "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." (Matt. xxi. 44.) The meaning of this passage is, that to whomsoever Christ shall be a stumbling-block in this life, he shall be destroyed (Rom. ix. 31); but on whomsoever the blood of Christ shall fall, which is the foundation of our salvation, it will crush him to hell, rather than to be ground to powder by the falling of mountains and rocks, than to endure that everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. "The great day of His wrath is come." Oh, what a foreboding, what a vivid comprehension of their fearful position before the Eternal Judge, and what a consciousness of guilt, already in prospect what a weight of guilt! Who shall be able to stand?" I repeat, what a consciousness of guilt! They had been *deceived*; been looking to the corrupt church of Rome for salvation, while it could only be found in Christ; and now they hear His voice: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" his agents or servants.

I have said, this *sixth* seal takes us down to the end of the *sixth* period of 666 years, to the end of the two thousandth year

of this Christian dispensation : and therefore in the remaining 132 years we may suppose some great glory will accrue to the Church and cause of Christ, as shall convince, not only all the Romish nations, but all without the pale of the true Church, that they are wrong; that the things of Christ are culminating, and that the judgment day is approaching. This is the simple thread of the history.

I might place here the *ecclesiastical* history under the *sixth* trumpet, which is of the same period (ix. from the 15th verse). And the *sixth* vial, which will close this last period of 666 years; the drying up of the Euphrates, the great Mohammedan power, or Turkish empire, that the Jews may return to Canaan (xvi. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16), and this period would be seen to be complete; but I must follow the Divine arrangement of the Book, although here the history is intensely interesting. Oh, how interesting to those now interested in it,—to all now living; for to some it may be said, “There be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.” (Mark ix.) A Pentecostal baptism may be at the very door; the heathen world may be brought in; and the cry under the *seventh* trumpet and the seventh vial may be heard: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.” (xi. 15.) “It is done.” (16, 17.)

But here I have only thus glanced at the *finishing* of the history, the better to understand the vision added under the last, the *sixth* seal,—the closing scene, as revealed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

In this chapter the winds of Divine judgment are seen held while the angel of the living God seals a hundred and forty and four thousand in their foreheads; which sealing signifies the resurrection of the first fruits of the Jewish nation. After which a number, which no man could number, of all people, nations, and tongues, are seen worshipping around the throne of God, and of the Lamb.

1 *And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.*

2 *And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,*

3 *Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.*

4 *And I heard the number of them which were sealed; an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

5 *Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.*

6 *Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.*

7 *Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.*

8 *Of the tribe of Zebulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

9 *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ;*

10 *And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

11 *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the elders—* The translator has added here, “and about the elders” (vii. 11), which is obviously wrong ; for the whole body of angels, elders, and the cherubim, are worshippers about the throne of God, and not about the elders.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the elders and the four cherubim, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 *Saying, Amen : Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

13 *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes ? And whence came they ?*

14 *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

15 *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*

16 *They shall hunger no more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*

17 *For the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

We must still bear in mind that the vision in this seventh chapter lies under the *sixth* seal, but so distinct is it in character that it justifies its separation from the last chapter. We must remember also that we are now at the end of the sixth period of 666 years, only 132 remain, and thus we may look daily for the fulfilment of this page of prophecy. The meaning of the vision is so plain upon the face of it that it scarcely requires explanation, and therefore I shall go through it slightly, but the chain of history will be clearly read.

The four *angels* in the first verse standing on the four corners of the earth, are the same as the four "living creatures" of 4, 6, 7, 8,—the four representatives of the Word of God; and if the Greek word *Υἱον*, had been so translated in that chapter, their true function in the constitution of the Christian Church would have been understood. Standing on the four corners of the earth signifies here that they are in possession of the four quarters of the world. This is so: the Word of God is translated into every tongue, and distributed in the four quarters of the world. This of itself is territory taken, victory won, although much remains to be done. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," and the Spirit and the life of that Word must take effect before the world can be saved. To propagate the letter is the least

difficult part of the work. "Holding the four winds of heaven," means the judgments contained in prophecy against Babylon the Great, and all anti-Christian powers that had refused subjection to Christ. (Isa. xiii. 1—19; xxi. 9; Jer. li. 8; l.; Rev. xiv. 8; xviii. 2.) "Winds" were the known emblems of general destruction. (Dan. vii. 2; Jer. iv. 36.) Here the judgments are held, or sealed in the word of prophecy; that they should not go forth to hurt the *earth* (the people without the pale of the Church) till a certain number of the Jewish nation had been sealed in their foreheads. This angel ascending from the east to seal this number, is the Holy Ghost; but whether in some human instrument, in some valiant minister of Christ about to rise, or whether it will be a miraculous baptism, I do not know: both are alike easy with God. We are commanded to use the means, and to depend on Him for the power. Numbers, in prophecy, are often representative numbers, and this number may represent the number of converted Jews that have been added to the Christian Church during the last fifty or hundred years; but I do not think so. It is particularly written, "After these things,"—after the glorious triumph of this sixth period had been seen under the sixth seal. And therefore in this close of it, within the 132 years more, I think we may pray for and confidently expect this sealing of the first fruits of the Jewish Church. All is hushed, and no great judgment may go forth upon these anti-Christian powers till these first fruits are gathered in. The vision is rooted in the ancient Jewish service of offering the first sheaf of the harvest in the temple of the Lord. (Levit. xxiii. 10, 12; 1 Cor. xv. 20.) How little did the Jews themselves know of the meaning of that simple type! but this antitype is to us a strong proof that we should yield

to the still small voice of the Spirit, and *obey* His holy dictates.

“And I heard the number of them that were sealed : and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the Children of Israel.” Twelve thousand of each of the twelve tribes. The thirty-seventh chapter of *Ezekiel* should be read here : the resurrection of the dry bones there, has the same meaning as this life from the dead here ; only there it is written, “These bones are the *whole* house of Israel,” and here the first fruits only are seen to rise. I say the chapter in *Ezekiel* should be read here : it is one of the most wonderful and sublime prophecies that was ever written. When God gives the command for His Spirit to go forth, who or what can withstand His almighty power ! Oh, that we knew this : that the power and the gift are alone His,—that by spiritual travail we must bring down heaven to earth ! “Come from the *four winds*, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” Judgments are awakening ; and so it is possible that when the four angels loosen the four winds that are now holden by them till these first-fruits rise from the dead, the “*whole* house of Israel” will also rise. “So I *prophesied* as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” As we see the *sixth* vial that is poured out upon the great river Euphrates at the close of this *sixth* period, we do understand this chain of history, and see how simple it is.

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb,

clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Here is not only a resurrection of the Jewish nation, but a like resurrection of "multitudes of *all* nations, tongues, and people." The fact seems rooted in the Pentecost, when in one day "three thousand souls" were added to the Church. But here the number swells: the time prophesied of by Isaiah is come: nations are born in a day. (lxvi. 8, 9.) "We saw the representatives of the Word standing on the four corners of the earth, in possession of the territory won." (vii. 1.) And now the universal Church is ministering before the throne of God and of the Lamb, worshipping and praising there. The Spirit and the life of that Word have given life to the world.

This page of history passes on to the end of the *sixth* vial, where the empire of the false prophet, or the Turkish empire, is dried up: and thus do we understand this anthem of victory in this outline of history. It is rooted in the ancient Jewish festivals, but Christianized, sung, and the Christian festival celebrated in the Christian temple. Palm was the known emblem of victory. (Cant. vii. 7; Ps. xcii. 12.) And they cried with a loud voice, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." The Lamb is the emblem of Christianity: now all are Christians, and they worship God, not only for deliverance and victory over those temporal powers, but also from Satan, for redemption and salvation. The Lamb of God is believed in, received, and worshipped.

"And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the elders, and the four representatives of the Word, and fell down before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and

honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." Oh, what a scene, what victory,—the victory of the angels, of the elders, and of the Word; and what joy: and so near at hand, too! It is yet within the power of the true Church of Christ to grasp the goal,—to obtain the prize, the mark of her high calling in Him. The period lies within 132 years,—the victory and the glory within 132 years.

One of the *elders*—who I have said are the representatives of the civil power, or rather of the spiritual government—said to John, "What are these that are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" The elder did not ask this question because he did not know what and who those redeemed ones were, but that their estate might be revealed,—that their saved, justified state might be exhibited to the world. They were then accepted in the Beloved; and adoption, eternal life, and glory, were theirs. The wonders of that state created his astonishment, and excited the question. The multitude before the throne thus glorified in the presence of God and of the Lamb might well excite the sudden inquiry, "What are these?" Why elected unto grace and eternal life? Why in the robes of the righteousness of the Lamb? Why cleansed by His Spirit, while the judgments of heaven are only held for a moment, the wrath of the Lamb only restrained for a moment, while these elect are gathered in? And then they are ready to rush forth to destroy the world without the pale of grace,—out of Christ. These wonders of redeeming grace are the astonishment of us all. Who can fathom them? Who can comprehend the depths of the riches of his own salvation? Who can estimate aright the state of peace and oneness with the Eternal?

John could only answer, "Sir, thou knowest." Both alike knew the fact that they were there,—that they were "they which came out of great tribulation, and had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,"—and that this was why they were before the throne of God, and serving Him day and night in His temple; but they could not solve the mystery of that grace that had brought them through: they could not *fathom* "the mystery of God,"—the persistence of that love that had worked, and wrought, and brought them there. Oh, it is a mystery! And we can easily enter into the spirit of love, of reverence, and of mystery of these two interlocutors, as they stand surrounded by the multitude of redeemed ones around the throne of God:—

"Why was I made to hear His voice,
And enter while there's room;
While thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come."

But, then, what should be our love and care for those who are *deceived*, beguiled by Satan, blinded by the god of this world, and so heedlessly passing on to the doom here revealed,—to this final doom? We should supplicate Christ to stand up on their behalf, to bring the power of God to bear on their behalf; for nothing but that deep, unfathomable grace, that we cannot comprehend, can reach them. But when it is put forth it can embrace the world. God can save, and is willing to save. Oh, then, why are we so slow to ask Him?

The Lamb is here seen to feed His saints, and to lead them to fountains of living waters; so that we do not know what riches of His grace lie still concealed, nor what new economies of blessedness are in store for those who love Him. "And

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes :” when *God* does this there must be eternal sunshine. Such is the beautiful portrait of the family of God,—of the culminating point of attainment in the Divine life ; for this throng is still of the Church on earth, although it is so glorious that it is always supposed to be of heaven. Seen as it is under the sixth seal proves it to be of earth. The chapter is one of the most sublime in Revelation.

It will be seen that these seventh and eighth chapters, as divided in our arrangement of the chapters, are badly divided, for the first verse of the eighth chapter is the finishing of this history under the seven seals in this seventh chapter ; therefore to separate the history under the seventh, the last seal, is obviously wrong. I shall therefore deviate here from our arrangement of the chapters, and place the first verse of the eighth chapter at the end of this history under the six seals, and the history of the regal enemy during the seven periods of 666 year will be seen to be entire.

8th chapter, 1st verse. And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

This silence in heaven at the opening of the seventh seal simply means a cessation of the Paschal hymn, or triumphant anthem we have heard sung under the sixth seal, of that song of thanksgiving for deliverance which we have heard so sublimely sung : and we have only to turn to the history under the *seventh* trumpet to know why it should thus cease. The third, and last, “woe” under the trumpets had then to be fulfilled ; and it would have been indecorous for even the triumphant Church to celebrate a jubilee, or any other great religious festival, while war, bloodshed, and the most dire

calamities were spread around her. "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." In heaven, means here, in the holy of holies of the Christian temple. Then, when the third "woe" is fulfilled (xi. from the 14th verse) the Paschal hymn is resumed, or again sung after another great deliverance. "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." In this third "woe," or history under the seventh *trumpet*, we find the explanation and fulfilment of the gracious promise to the sixth Church: "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. iii. 10.) And we have only to look at the seventh, the last awful vial of Divine wrath (Rev. xvi. 15), to further understand this solemn pause of these awestruck worshippers in the temple of God. From the time of the opening of this seventh *seal* the great closing events of the world's history follow rapidly each other, as some emphatic notifications foretold they should: "In the days of the voice of the *seventh* angel, when he shall *begin to sound*, the mystery of God should be finished." (Rev. x. 7.) "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth." (Rev. xvi. 15.) "There are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue *a short space*." (Rev. xvii. 10.) Thus close "the mystery of God," and "the mystery of iniquity" in the seventh period of 666 years.

The half hour under this seventh seal denotes, without doubt, some particular period of time, evidently a very short one. The Hebrews divided the day into four parts, and the night into three; and we may suppose these divisions of time in this book

are rooted in their ancient manner of dividing time, and that if it were carefully studied, the precise mind of the Spirit here might be ascertained. Our Saviour's constant reference to that ancient manner of dividing time leads us to believe that it was the root of His meaning throughout this book. My reader should turn to some of these passages, *Matt. xx. 1—3, 5, 6, 9; Mark xiii. 35.*

Thus is this wonderful prophecy constituted, and unless we do thus bring the history under this mathematical rule of seven, all is confusion, a perfect paradox; the victories of the Church and of the Lamb only end in defeat and increasing disorder; but by this arrangement the enemy is seen revealed, subjugated, and cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. (*Rev. xix. 20; xx. 2, 3.*) The Church of Christ is forearmed and forewarned, seen to pass triumphantly through all her spiritual conflicts from one degree of glory to another, till Christ in her is seen the victor (*Rev. xix. 11, 12, 16*), and she in Him gloriously victorious, enthroned with Him in eternal glory. (*Rev. xxi. 11.*)

Thus ends the history under the seven seals.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE first six verses of this chapter are a preface to the seven trumpets ; and the remainder of the chapter, together with the ninth chapter, is the history under six of the trumpets.

Rev. viii. 2. "*And I saw the seven angels which stood before God ; and to them were given seven trumpets.*" Angel means a duplex being,—an agent sent from God. (John xx. 21.) Thus these angels are "the seven Spirits which are before His throne," seen in Rev. i. 4. They are the angels of the seven Churches, and simply denote here Church history,—the ecclesiastical history of the same periods of 666 years. But under the seals the regal enemy is revealed, and under the trumpets corrupt apostacies, or Church history. The trumpets are simply given in distinction.

3 *And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer ; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.*

4 *And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayer of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.*

5 *And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth : and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*

These three verses seem rather a preface to the first trumpet, than to the whole seven. We read in it an outline of Church history under the first trumpet. But it subserves alike as a preface to the Christian dispensation as well as the Jewish, for we read the antitype in the type.

"And *another angel* came and stood at the altar,"—may refer to the Aaronic dispensation in distinction from the patriarchal, for we must remember the first period of 666 years was from Abraham to David,—“having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense:” of the Aaronic priesthood, or angel, this was literally true. The typical economy was here referred to; the incense was a type of the meritorious life and death of Christ: see that much incense. (Ex. xxx. 8; xl. 5; Levit. xvi. 13; Ps. cxli. 2.) The high priest did offer it with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar before the throne: “Let my prayer be set before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”

“And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.” Till Christ came the typical incense did thus ascend, but now the merit of His death ever ascends up before God; and His Holy Spirit within us maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

“And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth.” If my reader will turn to some passages, he will see this altar of burnt offering. (Levit. vi. 13; ix.) The fire on it might never go out; a type of the eternal justice of God that could not be satisfied till it had found its victim—Christ, who once for all did satisfy the utmost demand of justice. “Cast it on the earth,” signifies

here, cast abroad its foreshadows before Christ came,—that which the typical economy did. The sword of justice was never sheathed, but pursued its victim to the cross and to the tomb. “And there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” These voices were God’s, from Mount Sinai. The thunderings, the thunder of His power; and the lightnings, the arrows of the law, in their naked, deadly power; in the Mosaic economy. I have said this preface refers to that first period. “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Thus was the law so long in force, and its penalties so severe, that it might bring the world to Christ. Such is the outline of this preface, and it marks the period previously to the sounding of the first trumpet.

6 *And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

7 *The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.*

This language sets forth to us the economy of the law, the first 666 years of the Jewish dispensation. We must bear in mind that this history under the trumpets is Church history. And the trumpet is the trumpet of the Gospel. No sooner had our first parents fallen than it sounded to arms (Gen. iii. 15): there was then territory lost, that must be retaken; and the eternal Spirit sounded the alarm of war, of danger, of the Gospel of peace; and it is a blessed sound. As I have said before, these angels are the spiritual priesthood, of whatever name, tongue, or denomination. “Prepared themselves

to sound," simply means the preparation of the heart and life for the service of God, a knowledge of the Gospel scheme, and a due estimation of it to commend it to others.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood." Hail was the known emblem of enemies. Here spiritual enemies are signified. (Isa. xxviii. 2 ; xxxii. 19.) And the fire, of eternal justice and judgment,—that which in the preface we saw cast from the altar of burnt offering. The penalty of the law was signified,—that which was in such severe force till Christ came. (Num. xv. 32, 33 ; Josh. vii.) That which could really only find its victim in Him ; but was severely executed upon offenders, that the extent of the requirement of the Divine law might be felt ; and that we might know what our end must have been but for the free pardon of the Gospel scheme ; or, as St. Paul said, "The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." The law during those first 666 years was felt to be terrible ; even the great lawgiver himself could not enter the promised land by the covenant of works ; nor heaven by the same ; but by the decease that Christ accomplished at Jerusalem. This fire mingled with the blood of enemies and of transgressors, marks the period of the law. "And they were cast upon the earth." We have only to read the Mosaic laws, from the time they were given on Mount Sinai to the time of David, with all the executions of the penalties of transgression, to understand this figurative language, that justice and judgment were cast upon the earth. "And the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up." That is, all native purity perished. Trees in Scripture often mean good or bad men. (Ps. i. 3 ; Matt. iii. 10 ; xii. 33 ; Isa. lxi. 3.) And this is the meaning here : Divine justice was seen to be, and

felt to be, a consuming fire. "Our God is a consuming fire for sin;" and this first trumpet, the trumpet of the law, did proclaim this. And the curse was upon the ground also: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." (Gen. iii. 17, 18.) The curse, or the penalty of transgression, was alike on all; but "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." (Gal. iii.) He did never abrogate the law; but by His subjection to it in life, and by His death, He did abrogate the penalty of it.

"The third part," under the trumpets, must be particularly observed. It is explained in the codicil to the trumpets, as we might suppose such an important notification would be. "Here is wisdom," referring to the Divine wisdom confessed by Daniel. (Dan. ii. 20, 21, 23, 28, 30.) "Let him that hath understanding," or this wisdom, "count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man,"—of Nebuchadnezzar. "Let a beast's heart be given to him; and let *seven* times pass over him." (Dan. iv. 16, 32.) "And his number is six hundred threescore and six." (Rev. xiii. 18.) That is, *seven* periods of 666 years; "the third part" of a dispensation of 2,000 years. This verse is the key of the remarkable notification under these trumpets. And let the explanation now suffice for all.

8 *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;*

9 *And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.*

A mountain was the known emblem of a kingdom. (Isa. ii. 2, 12, 14; xi. 9; Dan. ii. 35; Zech. iv. 7; Matt. xvii. 20.) The language of this book is figurative, and we must explain it

according to ancient hieroglyphics or symbols. The language of our Saviour's teaching was entirely figurative, so that we might well suppose this last prophecy would be. We have only to turn back to the omen given to the augur under the first seal, a crown (Rev. vi. 2), to understand this usurper or great antichristian kingdom under this second trumpet. The page of history here given is the second 666 years of the second, the Jewish dispensation. The history is not Pagan but Jewish: a regal enemy, it is true; but one found in Church history. This great mountain of human authority was the kingdoms of Israel and Judah,—a weight, a clog, and a scourge cast into the midst of the people of God for correction, suffered to supervene between them; and Divine government as a scourge for their spiritual alienation of heart from God. Dates differ, but it is as nearly correct as possible to say that from the time of the beginning of Saul's reign down to the Babylonish captivity, which was the end of the dynasty of the kings of Israel, there were 666 years; and I have no doubt, if we could ascertain precisely, this Divine record would be found to be the correct one upon the subject. In the Septuagint and Vulgate, the two books of Samuel are called the first and second books of Kings, so that in these copies of the Bible there are four books of Kings. And the period in them, down to the end of both kingdoms, by the carrying away the ten tribes captive into Assyria by Shalmaneser, and the other two into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, was, as I have said, precisely 666 years, making this second period of regal Jewish history. It stands alone in the world's history; and as we look back upon the feuds, wars, rivalries, jealousies, internal and civil wars, the struggles of the two kingdoms with more powerful nations than

themselves, do we not understand the expression that kingdom of the people of God became blood? And obnoxious such a state of affairs must have been to Him. ' kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in Holy Ghost ;' and this would have been the holy estate of people if they had not rebelled against God. Let us glance at these verses, and in a moment we shall see their true meaning.

Of these successive eras we have read, "Another angel came and stood at the altar." . . . "And the second angel sounded his trumpet. . . . Who was this second angel? Samuel : and his voice was as the voice in him. See his remarkable calling to Divine office, his entire surrender and consecration of him by his mother, that it is one of the most touching histories of the Bible. "*When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of oil, and brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh. . . . And he was lent him to the Lord ; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord throughout his life.*" Reader, did you ever consider that consecration of a child to God? "Who is thus willing to consecrate His service this day unto the Lord?" (1 Chron. xxix. 5.)

And then the direct call of Samuel : "The Lord called Samuel. . . . And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. . . . And the Lord called again the third time. . . . And the Lord came and stood, and called at other times, Samuel, Samuel. . . . And the Lord appeared in Shiloh : for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord." "Samuel ministered before the Lord, a child, girded with a linen ephod" (1 Samuel. i., ii., iii.) And his spirit and attitude of supplication are preserved in monuments of colour and of marble,

will remain to the end of time. I have thus glanced at the consecration of this angel of the Lord that we may henceforth, as we proceed, understand this announcement: "Another angel came and stood at the altar." The spiritual calling of every dynasty is the same, although the outward form may vary. The priesthood of the house of Eli was then at an end, and a new era began: "I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end." (1 Sam. iii. 11, 12, 14.)

Now, listen to God's voice by His new high priest upon the subject of that regal, human usurper before he came upon the throne: "All the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and said to Samuel, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." St. Peter said, "Ye are a peculiar people." Living under the Divine government, the government of "the Word of God," is our grand feature; and that peculiarity we should be proud of, and careful to preserve intact, and not wish to be like all the nations of the earth.

"Ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye have chosen you: and the Lord will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations. . . . And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king." (1 Sam. viii., xii.) Here God's word upon the subject was plain and positive, and should have been absolute with the people; but they rejected His government,

as the world ever has done since a temporal crown was given to the devil. He suffered them to have their own blind, beguiled, wilful way, to have a king, and was very long-suffering and merciful to them in their rebellion ; but the sufferance was a scourge from Him ; and thus that corrupt dynasty ended in what it only could end in,—dissolution. Now let us look at these verses, and we shall find the true key to them in the history of those 666 years, from Samuel down to the Captivity.

“The second angel sounded.” Was not the trumpet of Samuel’s voice a proclamation of a new era? “Samuel told Eli, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the Lord : let him do what seemeth Him good.” And was it not the trumpet of the everlasting Gospel? Of the alarm of war with that insidious regal foe? Of tender consolation and encouragement? Let my reader read the two books, and he will find all these. “The Lord will not forsake His people for His great name’s sake : because it hath pleased the Lord to make you His people. Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in *ceasing to pray for you* : but I will teach you the good and the right way.” (1 Sam. xii. 22, 23.) Did not the smoke of that incense ascend up before God out of the angel’s hand.

“And as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea.” This great mountain was the kingdom of Israel. “Cast into the sea”—the laver of the tabernacle. (Exod. iii. 17, 18.) And the molten sea of the temple (2 Chron. iv. 4—6) represented the Hierarchy, or the Kingdom of God ; the spiritual nature of that kingdom : “My kingdom is not of this world.” The spiritual nature of Divine truth, with which the priesthood was intrusted : “The sea was for the

priests to wash in." It was supported by twelve oxen, four looking towards the east, four towards the west, four towards the north, and four towards the south; signifying, as the temple was a type of the Christian Church, that the regenerating and sanctifying waters of the sea of life in the sacred writings were to be borne to the four quarters of the earth. Air, fire, and water were the known emblems of spirit, as much amongst the heathens as the Jews; and hence the element of water was made to typify the life of the eternal Spirit of God. We have seen this cleansing fountain in the temple of God in this Christian dispensation: "Before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal." (Rev. iv. 6.) And we do still see it. (John xvii. 14, 17, 19; Eph. v. 25, 26; Jas. i. 18.) "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." (John xiii. 8.) And hence the confessions and anthems of the royal priesthood of the Christian temple, which my reader must turn to for himself. (Rev. i. 5, 6; v. 9, 10.) The Christian Church is now the depositary of that sea of life, as the Jewish Church was then. And this great mountain, or human usurper, was cast into it as a scourge, or minister of Divine justice. We have seen Samuel at the altar of incense praying for his people; but we must remember we have seen him too turn from that altar to the altar of burnt-offering, and obtain for them of God this scourge that they so implored for themselves. And was not their dynasty of kings just this, a great power burning with fire to them,—with the fire of eternal justice? Jeroboam, whose only badge of distinction was that he made Israel to sin; and Ahab, who did evil in the sight of the Lord more than all the kings that were before him: "Which

did sell himself to work iniquity, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." Who can understand the sins of David, the depths into which he was left to fall, if it was not that he arrogated to himself the human prowess that God forbade, knowing that His grace was sufficient in the weakest instrument? I say, who can understand the end of David's life? It is the most melancholy page of history in the annals of time. And the defection of Solomon: his fall was so tremendous, that we feel there must have been something radically wrong in David, for the kingdom of God to be thus undermined,—and in his son, thus to fall. (1 Tim. iii. 5, 6.) "And the third part of the sea became blood." Was not this so during those 666 years? Was not the internal state of the Jews one of war and blood? Of disunion and conflict between the faithful of God's people and the regal tyrant? (1 Kings xviii.) And with all the foreign powers around them they were never at peace. (2 Kings xvii., xviii., xix.) And so on to the time of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, and the destruction of Jerusalem, to the time of the captivity. This "third part" means the 666 years of that dynasty. The end as well as the whole period was indeed blood.

It is very remarkable that it is a *regal* enemy seen under this second trumpet, although the history under the trumpets is ecclesiastical, just as the history under the fifth seal is ecclesiastical, when Imperial Rome had fallen, although it is a *regal* enemy revealed under the seals.

"And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died." This refers to the Levitical priesthood, which as a body in Divine office during these 666 years, became extinct, and was superseded by the Divine government by the prophets: from Samuel down to Malachi, they were all priests

and prophets. It is true the ancient order was restored for a moment under David and Solomon, but as a divinely-organized body the theocracy of the prophets stood in their stead; they all stood before God to inquire of Him, as the high priest had done before. The sacred writings were lost (2 Kings xxii.), the temple service was a ruin; and in the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and in his reckless extermination of the people, not respecting for a moment the remnant of the order of the priesthood, did not that body that had life, die? died spiritually,—as God's agent, become extinct? "*Three* shepherds also I cut off in one month." Meaning a round of time, referring to the Jewish dispensation; to these *three* sections of it: "And my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me." (Zech. xi.) Let my reader read this chapter with some others, and he will quite understand this body in the sea of life, spoken of as dead; dead, without Christ and the Holy Ghost in them. (Isa. vi. 10—12; Ezek. xxxiv.)

"And the third part of the ships were destroyed." A ship was the known emblem of a Church. And were not all the holy places in Jerusalem and in Canaan destroyed during those 666 years, and in their close? See Dan and Bethel under Jeroboam: 1 Kings xii., from ver. 27; xiii.; Amos viii. 14; v. 5, 6; 2 Kings xxiii. See also Shiloh during that period: 1 Kings ii. 27; xiv. 2, 4; Ps. lxxviii. 60; Jer. vii. 14, 22; xvi. 6. And even the gorgeous temple of Solomon, was it not destroyed? "Zion shall be ploughed like a field." "Zion is desolate, the foxes walk upon it." (Lamen. v.) But let my reader turn to 2 Kings xxiv. and xxv.; Jer. lii.; and he will read the melancholy end of that temple, of the holy city, of that dynasty of kings, of that period of 666 years; and he will

understand this passage, "The third part of the ships were destroyed." "Nebuchadnezzar burnt the house of the Lord, and the King's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great house burnt he with fire." I beg my readers to read the chapters I have referred to, and as they do so, to reflect seriously upon the subject of a monarchical government, to ask whether it be of God; and if we, who have followed in the very footsteps of ancient Israel, may not expect a like dissolution? Equality does seem to me the headstone of the kingdom of grace, but how it is now to be brought forth I do not know: the power of God the Holy Ghost alone can do it. (Acts iv. 32, 34, 35; Zech. iv. 6, 7.)

Let us rejoice that Christ not only abrogated the penalty of the law, but the penalty of all sin,—even of this, the rebellion of the heart against God; if He had not, where should we all now be who have a regal government not less enormous or sinful than had ancient Israel? But there is now no altar of burnt offering from which to cast the fire of eternal justice; it was quenched when Christ had met its claim: there is no gulf between sin and pardon, between the sinner and the Saviour; this I will ever proclaim. But grace outraged, and God's word disobeyed, justice may rebound upon the sinner's head. The words of St. Paul in Heb. x. 26—31, are some of the most awful in the Word of God. But I repeat, even at the eleventh hour there is forgiveness for rebellion of heart against God; and in subjection to His reign, if we turn with hearty repentance towards Him.

10 *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;*

11 *And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters because they were bitter.*

The page of history under this trumpet was the 666 years from the carrying away into Babylon to Christ. The corrupt religion of regal Rome parallel with the history of the regal enemy seen under the *third* seal. The religion of the Romans was borrowed from the Greeks, although all other heathen deities were more or less worshipped by them. My reader should here turn to the mythology of Greece, to its numberless deities: of the heavens,—Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, Mercury, Bacchus, Vulcan, Juno, Minerva, Venus, Diana, Ceres, and Vesta; of the sea,—Neptune, and many others; of the infernal regions,—Pluto, and others; fully to understand the corrupt system upon which the religion of ancient Rome was founded. It is said to have contained four hundred and twenty temples, dedicated to different deities. Therefore, I think, we are prepared to understand this new phenomenon under the third trumpet; new, because the religion of the Romans was as distinct, although partaking of more ancient false systems, as the nation was distinct. A false religion, imitating as nearly as possible the religion of the true God, has ever been the stronghold of the devil. The enormous system of Roman deities was invented to keep the people in awe and in subjection.* But augury was a new phase of false systems amongst the Romans, and I think it was very likely to that one presumptuous, Satanic system, that this star chiefly refers. They drew their *prophecies* from the most absurd occurrences,—such as spilling salt upon the table, wine

* See Cicero on the nature of the gods.

upon one's clothes, stumbling, or sneezing, etc., etc.,—and reigned and ruled by such absurdities; hence may have arisen later the designation in this book of the Revelation: "These two *prophets* tormented them that dwelt on the earth." (Rev. xi. 10.)

"There fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp." A star was the known emblem of a prince or chief ruler. (Num. xxiv. 17; Matt. ii. 2.) This great star means a great false teacher or ruler, in contradistinction to the angels of the Churches. (Rev. i. 20.) St. Jude employed the same language to reveal apostate teachers. (Jude 13.) And St. John writes, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." This star was a false prophet; as I have said, it may refer particularly to the prophetic augur himself. The mythological religion of Rome was greater than that of Greece, because it was a combination of almost all false religions. This star as relating to that period, must certainly signify the corrupt religion of Rome, which power really reigned and ruled with more authority than the kings or the Republic. "Fell from heaven," may mean here, from the firmament of the regal system, as we read of it under the sixth seal: "The ~~heaven~~ departed as a scroll." (Rev. vi. 14.) The regal enemy in the world's history had long borne sway; and Satan does thus transform himself from one state of temporal glory to another.

A *lamp* was the emblem of Divine light and illumination, and this was what that false pretender, or Pagan system, laid claim to,—to rule by the gods, and to be divine. "And it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." These rivers and fountains of waters do represent

the hierarchy of the one true God. The temple was then a ruin, and the molten sea of it obsolete. Hosea wrote of this third period, "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king,"—without a visible, divinely constituted government,—“and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.” (Hos. iii. 4.) Then it was the sacred Jordan superseded the molten sea as a type, even as early as the dynasty of the prophets. Naaman was sent to wash in the Jordan (2 Kings v.), and if my reader will turn to a few passages he will see the true meaning of these rivers and fountains of waters. (Ps. xlv. 4; Isa. xli. 18; xliii. 19; Matt. iii. 11, 13, 15; xxi. 23, 25, 27; xxviii. 19; Mark i. 9; John iii. 22, 23; iv. 1, 2; vii. 38, 39; Acts i. 5; ii. 38; viii. 12, 13, 16, 36, 38; ix. 18; Jer. ii. 13; xvii. 13; Joel iii. 18; Zech. xiii. 1; Rev. xxi. 6.) The great star of Pagan Rome, or of Pagan idolatry, did fall into the rivers and fountains of waters of God's grace,—into the pale of His own people. His teaching was “the doctrine of Balaam,” and of Jezebel,—the charge laid against the *third* and *fourth* Churches.

“And the name of the star is called Wormwood.” Wormwood is a very bitter plant, and a deadly poison; its poisonous hurtful nature is often spoken of in Scripture to signify bitter judgments. “I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall.” (Jer. xxiii. 15; Deut. xxix. 18.) But here the name of this corrupt religion is in contrast and opposition to the names of Christ,—“the tree of life,” “the true vine,” “the plant of renown,” and “the angel of the waters,”—who from Himself, “the Word,” and by His Church, feeds the multitude with milk, wine, honey, and gives “living waters”

to all who thirst for them (Is. lv. 1; Ezek. xvi. 13; 1 Pet. ii. 2; John iv. 14), with pure doctrine. "On either side of the river is the tree of life: and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations." (Rev. xxii. 2.) Corrupt doctrine is what is signified by this name wormwood.

"And the third part of the waters became wormwood." The pure doctrines of the Word of God were very greatly corrupted during those 666 years; and in all probability communication and alliance with Rome, its fountain of Pagan corruptions, were the direct cause: the Talmud, a Hebrew book of traditions and laws, probably gathered from Grecian and Roman ethics; together with many apocryphal books, which were a mixture of the Jewish Scriptures with mythological works. It is probable the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes, and of the Gnostics, were from those crude works,—from a mixture of Pagan philosophy with Scripture. Were not such admixtures wormwood in "the river of life"? It was to these our Saviour so often referred. "Why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your traditions. . . . Ye make the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." (Matt. xv.) "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. xv. 9; Col. ii. 8.) A system of ethics like those of the philosophers of Greece and Rome, without Gospel doctrine, is poison to the soul. "And many men died of the waters because they were bitter." That is, they died spiritually from corrupt doctrine, and because it cost them persecution and death to maintain the truth. But in whatever way this old Pagan woman may be presented to us, we do recognise her features; in Pagan, or more modern Rome, she is the same.

12 *And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*

13 *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!*

The page of history under this seal is from the birth of Christ to the end of the first period of 666 years of this Christian dispensation. The fourth angel was the true hidden Church of Christ of that period. "The third part of the sun was smitten," means the visible constitution, or the ruling power, was smitten. And as we look back at the smittings of the hierarchy of God of that period, do we not understand this language? The destruction of Jerusalem, the utter rejection and dispersion of the holy people; a page of history that no one can read without awe and the most solemn reflections. In this period, Christ, "the Sun of Righteousness," was *smitten* for the sin of others: "I will *smite* the shepherd,"—and the persecution of the early Christian Church,—and all by Rome, "the destroyer:" seen under the fourth seal. (vi. 8.) Every religious sect was tolerated at Rome except the Jews and the Christians, and these were most cruelly and barbarously treated. "And the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened." That is, there was no visible constitution during that period,—"the third part," or the 666 years. The inner life of the Church increased in her weakness; but her civil and secular arm was broken. The

codicil to the seal explains the meaning here ; it is of the same period. "The woman"—the Christian Church—"fled into the wilderness,"—a wilderness life was hers,—“where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” “That *they* should” means the two witnesses, the two spiritual priesthoods of the two periods of 666 years, dating from two years later than the destruction of Jerusalem, of the old constitution,—1332—1260—72. As I have said, instead of a constituted visible government, a wilderness life was hers. (xii. 6, 7.)

And the *fourth* vial explains the remainder of the passage : “And the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.” The day here means the period of 666 years ; “and the night” refers to the fourth vial, the fall of Imperial Rome. “The fourth angel poured out his vial upon the *sun* :” as I have shown there is no *regal* power under the *fifth* seal. (vi. 9—11.) “And power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.” This was a reference to the translation of the spiritual enemy from Imperial Rome to the Romish Church, or to corrupt Christianity. “The dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.” (xiii. 2.) The transformation was very easy, and would have been very hidden and unknown if it had not been for Revelation. But the wording of these passages is very remarkable, and reveals the mystery. “And power was given unto *him* to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat.” (xvi. 8, 9.) This referred to the Romish heresies and corrupt doctrines of the next 666 years, which were suffered for correction, as is explained.

The expression, “smitten,” under this fourth trumpet, is rooted in many passages of Scripture. If my reader will turn

to them, he will see what those corrections of the visible body of the Church were. (Gen. viii. 21; Deut. xxviii. 22, 35; xxvii. 28.) "The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt. . . . The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart." (Exod. iii. 20; viii. 2; ix. 15; xii. 12, 13.) Sin must be thus felt to induce the sinner to flee to Christ, whose blood can alone cleanse.

"And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the *inhabiters of the earth* by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound." This angel was the faithful Church of Christ of that fourth dispensation. The verse is a prophecy added to the page of history under the trumpet. She is ever thus upon the watch-tower of Zion sounding the trumpet of alarm, of spiritual warfare, and of the everlasting Gospel. Although then not visibly constituted, she did thus fly with holy ardour through the community of God's people to proclaim these direful woes to the world, to those who still shut out Christ, the Saviour of the world. The three woes referred to the trumpets, to the next three pages of history under them; to the Romish antichrist and persecution; to the destruction of that power under the sixth trumpet; and to the spiritual conflict under the seventh trumpet. Thus simple is the chain of history. But let me say here that no true believer can be scorched with the fire of false doctrine, hurt by the corruptions of Rome,—only "the inhabitants of the earth," as we shall see under the next trumpet.

This prophecy, or the three "Woes," here proclaimed by this angel under this fourth trumpet, are most remarkable. The Romish leaven, or a corrupt Christianity, had sprung up in the

bosom of the Church of Christ ; and the three succeeding periods of woe, first to the Church, and then to the enemy, were the consequence of that corruption. I say this *new* proclamation, or prophecy of *new* conflicts, is remarkable, because I have said it was the will of God that the world should be saved in that first period of 666 years of the Christian dispensation ; in the seventh period of 666 years, dating from Adam. But instead of this the Church did glide into Rome,—that which she may do again,—or into anything else, and again prolong the conflict.

CHAPTER IX.

IN this chapter lie the two pages of history under the fifth and sixth trumpets.

1 *And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.*

2 *And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.*

3 *And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.*

4 *And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.*

5 *And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when it striketh a man.*

6 *And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.*

7 *And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared*

unto battle ; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

8 *And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.*

9 *And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron ; and the sound of their wings was as it were the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.*

10 *And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails : and their power was to hurt men five months.*

11 *And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*

12 *One woe is past ; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.*

The page of history under this trumpet is from the year 666 of this Christian dispensation to the year 1332. The fifth period of 666 years. Whether we look at it under the fifth church, the fifth seal, or this fifth trumpet, it is the blackest page of the world's history. And beside which there is in it mystery, deep mystery, that can only be spiritually explained. Deep spiritual alliance of the Mohammedan and Romish Antichrists revealed to us ; and it is this spiritual nature we must read.

The star that is seen to fall from heaven under this trumpet, was the evil angel of the great Mohammedan heresy ; not Mahomet alone, but an evil spirit stretching from his rise down to the sixth vial, to the drying up of the Euphrates at the end of the 2000 years of this dispensation. Under this fifth trumpet we see his spiritual alliance with the Romish Antichrist ; and under the next, the sixth trumpet, Mohammedanism overcomes Romanism : that which we have seen in this third period of 666

years of this dispensation. We must remember the great Pagan star, the Roman idolater, fell under the *third* trumpet (Rev. viii. 10); and that the *omen*, or the "Hell," under the fourth *seal*, is fully revealed under the *fifth seal*; which page of history is the same period as this under the fifth trumpet. And this is why the history of the Mohammedan star is given here, although his spiritual existence is seen to be one with the Romish Antichrist. I repeat this fact because it is important to notice that under the *fifth seal* no regal or Imperial enemy is seen, although under the seals it is the regal enemy that is revealed,—the spiritual usurper migrated into pontifical sovereignty; and his deeds of darkness and of blood are revealed under that seal: while here, under the *fifth trumpet*, the Mohammedan enemy is seen, and their spiritual alliance revealed.

"And to Him was given the key of the bottomless pit:" that is of the "Hell," or evil nature under the fourth seal. (Rev. vi. 5.) In the codicil to the trumpets it is said, "He exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him:" that is, they lived at the same time, their evil plots and stratagems were performed on the same field of action. "And he causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast. . . . And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast." (Rev. xiii. 12.) The spiritual being was one, the devil, although the bodies he assumed were distinct.

"And he opened the bottomless pit:" that is, the great apostate star, or fallen angel, opened the gulf of heresy, of idolatry, of murder, and of blasphemy; a depth of evil that had never been known before, and that had no bottom, only as it had been fathomed by Christ for its destruction. As we look

back do we not see this eruption from that gulf! The Romish and Mohammedan heresies rose at the same time; and there never was a more violent breaking forth from the infernal regions. When we think of a corrupt, counterfeit Christianity in the one case, a partial restoration of Judaism, a corruption of the ancient Scriptures, and the false doctrine of the unity of the Godhead to obscure Christ, we see what a deep laid plot of the wicked one it was.

"And there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace." Smoke was the known emblem of confusion, darkness, justice, and judgment; here heresy and corruption are signified, and that in a most scorching, consuming degree. The sun of the nominally professing Christian kingdom, which under the last trumpet we saw smitten by the Imperial idolater, is now darkened by Papal heresy and Mohammedan corruption.

"The *sun* and the *air* were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit:" that is, all the powers, spiritual and temporal, were deceived, and the understanding darkened by the false doctrine of those evil spirits of hell. Christianity itself was in a state of darkness and confusion; no visible constitution, and no secular arm that dared, or that wished to rise in its defence.

"And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth." These locusts are false teachers, corrupters of the Gospel; such as will ever arise in times of darkness and tumult. Locusts were peculiar to Africa and Arabia, so that the Mohammedans are clearly represented by these here spoken of; and they are charged with the old serpent's sting, the poison of false doctrine,—that which will ever issue from the smoke of the powers of darkness, from doubts, unbelief, and disorder. In the plague of locusts in Egypt, an east wind brought them from the great

Arabian desert. It is the nature of locusts to go forth in very great multitudes. (Prov. xxx. 27; Isa. xxxiii. 4.) "Make thyself many as the cankerworm, make thyself many as the locusts. . . . Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the grasshoppers." (Nahum iii. 15—17.) Thus does one fact of Scripture explain another. When we think of the Mohammedan hordes over the whole world, we do well understand this dreadful prophecy.

"And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power:" this power is the bite or sting of the old serpent; the language is rooted in Num. xxi. 6, 7; Gen. iii. 1, 4, 14. The poison of false doctrine is signified. But by whom the evil power is *given* is a solemn problem for us to solve; "Lead us not into temptation" is the key to it. God gives us a day of grace, of probation, and if we do not repent, and believe, and turn to Him, judicial punishment does overtake us. "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth." (2 Thess. ii.) This chapter should be carefully read with these extreme judgments of the Almighty.

"And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree:" that was, that there should be no natural calamities; that the conflict should be wholly of a spiritual nature,—one between truth and error,—between true and false doctrine. "But only those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads:" that is, only nominal professors,—those who were not genuine believers. The seal of God is the seal of His own Spirit: "After ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. i. 13.) Without this seal of holiness

and of adoption, we are exposed not only to the assaults of the devil, but also to condemnation and eternal death: that which was so strikingly foreshown under the last trumpet by the faithful Ambassador of Christ, who flew through the midst of heaven, saying, "Woe, woe, woe, *to the inhabitants of the earth.*" (Rev. viii. 13.) And hence this notification under this trumpet: "There came out of the smoke locusts *upon the earth*" (Rev. ix. 3); upon the inhabitants of the earth, as the angel had foretold. Heaven and earth, as I have before shown, do represent in this book the true, hidden Church of Christ, and the world without her pale: and what is very striking, the nominally professing Church is included in the latter. "The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

"And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented *five months.*" These five months here are very difficult to explain, but I do not think the period refers to the entire period of the power of these beings, but to some particular period of persecution. The forewarning voice may be a prophecy in this page of history,—that which we have so continually seen, and shall yet see throughout this book. There is no "third part" mentioned under this trumpet, but I think the trumpet represents "the third part," and that these five months refer to the 150 years beyond the 666 of the fifth period,—to the period between Wickliff and Luther, which was one of the greatest possible persecutions, and precisely 150 years. Time under these trumpets is computed according to the ancient custom of computing time, from the Jewish festivals, and here from the feast of trumpets, which was an annual festival celebrated in the

beginning of the *seventh* month of the holy year. (Levit. xxiii. 24, 25.) There was also the feast of months. (Ps. lxxxi. 3, 4.) But in the codicil to these trumpets the meaning of these months under this fifth trumpet is explained. (Rev. xi. 2, 3.) The "forty and two months" of this second verse, multiplied by thirty, make precisely the 1260 *days* of the third verse,—which days mean years, because the feast of trumpets was annual. And so of these "five months," in the fifth and tenth verses of this ninth chapter: they multiplied by these thirty days make 150 days, as I have shown,—meaning years, according to the sabbatical system of Jewish feasts. God explained the same by Ezekiel: "I have appointed thee each day for a year." (Ezek. iv. 6.) And so here, these "five months" must be reckoned as the Divine Dictator afterwards explained them in the codicil. (Rev. xi. 2, 3.)

We must remember the striking voice of the *prophecy* under the fifth seal: "It was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a *little season*, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Rev. vi. 11.) Under this *seal*, the deeds of the Romish antichrist are revealed, and under the *fifth* trumpet the perversion of nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues to the Mohammedan heresy. But I again repeat what I have said,—that I think both the seal and the trumpet represent the 666 years; and that the "five months," or 150 years, are a prophecy added to the period, and refer to the period between Wickliff and Luther; as is again explained in the codicil to the seals and trumpets. (Rev. xi. 9, 11.) We must also remember the voice of the *fifth* Church: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall

walk with me in white: for they are worthy." (Rev. iii. 4.) We now know the history of the Waldenses and Albigenses: "the snowy peaks of the Alps have been witnesses to thousands of murders;" and the Vaudois valleys to greater outrages than had ever been committed by Pagan tyrants of any former ages. It is said those humble, holy, faithful Christians were "flayed alive, and then crushed with heavy stones, cast down from towers, their flesh shredded with iron whips, and then beaten to death with lighted brands, starved in the prisons, suffocated in vast numbers even in their caves of refuge; mothers and children driven up by hundreds to perish in the upper snows, their flesh cut alive from their bones, their bones broken between iron bars, their infants hurled from the heights, or dashed against the rocks, and their brains eaten by their murderers." This is only a specimen of a long period of a like persecution and hellish cruelty, not only in the Swiss mountains and valleys, but throughout many kingdoms.* Christendom was darkened; and yet amidst all those tortures and appalling horrors, the doctrine of Christ was preserved pure, and reserved in its Divine almighty power to break the chains of darkness, and to enlighten the world. "The life was the light of men." At such a cost was our glorious Reformation purchased. Oh, how should we prize the light and life thus evolved, and thus gloriously increased!

These were the scenes enacted by the Romish antichrist; but I only glance at them here, because it was spiritually allied with the Mohammedan beast, who was also foreshown under

* These verses may refer to Mohammedan persecution alone: I leave my reader to judge.

this fifth trumpet, as is explained later in the 11th verse. But these heresies of hell never would have been suffered by God had it not been for the corruptions in the Christian Church. It may be truly said, both alike arose in her own bosom. Those corruptions were of Pagan traditions; and the Koran is a mixture of traditions and the Jewish Scriptures.

"And their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when it striketh a man." This torment was, first, false doctrine, and then the torment of condemnation for sin, for heresy. The language is rooted in Num. xxi., in the bite of the fiery serpents in the wilderness; and Christ Himself explained the Divine purpose of that judgment, and its remedy. I pray my reader to turn to the grand Gospel explanation, and the whole of this black history will be comprehended in a moment. (John iii. 14, 18.) Oh, that the eyes of all Jews, infidels, and heretics could be directed to the Son of God, as He is there seen lifted up; their scales would fall, and they would live!

But we must remember, in this deadly conflict, it is the Mohammedan and Romish antichrists exerting all their power to gain over these merely nominal believers to their faith, to force them to receive the visible sign of their Apostate Church. (Rev. xiii. 16, 17.) And therefore this "seal of God," in the foreheads of the firm adherents to Christ, not only signifies the inner life of the eternal Spirit, but also the visible sign of His cross; the open and public confession of His name before the unbelieving world He would receive. Oh, that all who profess His name might be alike prepared with both!

"And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it: and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."

This describes the state of a sinner under condemnation, with

the weight of unpardoned sin upon his mind, soul, and spirit ; with the wrath of the Lamb, and of an unreconciled God, upon his guilty head ; none who have not felt that state can conceive of it. But there can be no rest in Christ till we are thus driven out of ourselves to Him ; no saving recourse to the remedy, till sin is indeed felt to be a grievous and a bitter thing. But rest in Christ is heaven : thus every billow of the stricken conscience ceases to roll, every wave to lash against the sin-sick soul. Sinner, come to Jesus just as you are, and rest in His mercy, grace and love ; let Him in into the inward recesses of your heart, and let the world in its ten thousand forms fall before the august presence,—the God in His moral splendour. The graces of the Spirit in the believer's soul illumine the native gloom, but what the full weight of guilt upon the soul of the unbeliever must be, I do not know ; one of the most awful revelations we have of it is in Rev. xvi. 10, 11 : " They gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." With these awful realities revealed to us, our lives should be one continual thanksgiving that we are not in hell ; that God of His infinite grace has called us to holiness and peace. " There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Let us not forget that this awful " Woe " could only hurt those who had not the seal of the Spirit. For those who have the Spirit it is written, " My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." " Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer." " Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul : but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."

"And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

"And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

"And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

"And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months."

This description is simply figurative, Oriental language, but the mind of the Spirit in it is easily read. These locusts, like horses prepared to battle, tell us again of those hordes of Arabians whose horses are the swiftest in the world; whose hand was to be against every man, and every man's hand against them. Their crowns notify a royal power: this the Ishmaelites were in the past (Gen. xxv. 13, 18); and the great Saracen empire was Mohammedan. Their faces as the faces of men, reveal to us "The beast," the devil incarnate in him. (Dan. iv. 16; Prov. iii. 19—21; Rev. xiii.) The hair as the hair of women, notifies the bearded Arabian tribes; and also a spurious priesthood, as the hair of the Nazarite was not to be cut. (Num. vi. 5.) And women in Scripture is the common emblem of Churches: the corrupt Churches of these allied powers are here signified. Teeth were an emblem of cruelty. (Prov. xxx. 14.) As the teeth of lions may denote the Assyrian power, the spiritual nature of whom transmigrated into the Persian power, from the Persian into the Grecian, and from that into the Roman power. "It had great iron teeth." (Dan. vii. 4, 7.) As I have said, these two powers are here spiritually allied.

Without doubt the standard of the Assyrian power was a lion, and as in the ancient prophets it is spoken of by that name (Jer. iv. 7 ; v. 6 ; Joel i. 6 ; Amos iii. 4, 8), we quite understand why the ancient standard should be brought into this far future to represent the same spiritual enemy. All the Arabian tribes from Ham (Gen. x. 6—10), Ishmael, and downwards.

The breastplates of iron represent military prowess, human and spiritual conflict. (Eph. vi. 14.) The sound of their wings as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle, signifies the swiftness of ambassadors and armies, of great men, all engaged in deadly conflict. (Ezek. x. 5.) Their tails like unto scorpions, and stings in their tails, denote evil angels. (Num. xxi. 6 ; Ps. lxxviii. 49 ; 1 Kings xxii.) The union of a great apostate ecclesiastical power with a regal Antichristian power is what is here revealed to us. The same false teachers, spiritual and doctrinal conflict, are seen under the fifth Church. (3—6.)

The five months, or 150 years, here again mentioned are, I think, the same prophecy of the period between Wickliff and Luther. The translation of the Scriptures by Wickliff was the first smiting of these powers, as seen under the *sixth* seal (Rev. vi. 12), but the full orb'd glory of the Reformation did not break forth till the time of Luther.

“And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit :” that is, the evil spirit of hell. “Whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” These two names represent the two beasts : Abaddon, the Mohammedan beast (Rev. xiii. 11), of Hebrew descent, from Ham and Ishmael, down to all the Arabian hordes ; Apollyon is the Romish beast, of Gentile or

Greek extraction. The spirit in them is one : the evil angel of hell. And it is he who was the *king* over the hordes and multitudes of people. The designation king may refer to the Papal Sovereign, to Mahomet, to the kings of the Saracen empire, and to the Sultans, or to all these, for this verse plainly reveals to us that the Evil Spirit is but one. Although of Hebrew and Gentile lineage, the two names have the same meaning,—“the Destroyer;” from the destroying angel who slew the first-born of the Egyptians, and passed over the Israelites. “The blood shall be to you for a token ; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you.” (Exod. xii.) Here, in the Revelation, the Spirit of God, the life of the blood of Christ is the token, and the destroying angel might not hurt any who had it in their foreheads.

We now look back upon this page of history under the fifth Church, the fifth seal, and the fifth trumpet, and it is the blackest in the world’s history. Let us thank God that it is passed ; and may He give His people grace that they may never so provoke or tempt Him that He shall cause a recurrence of the same.

“One woe is past ; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.” These woes relate entirely to the trumpets : the one is under the sixth, the next trumpet, and the third under the seventh trumpet. The word means the curse, or the wrath of God executed upon unbelievers, upon corrupters of the Gospel, or merely nominal professors, to restore them to the faith as it is in Jesus. Thus there is Divine purpose in God’s sufferance of these two great heresies ; Rev. xi. 4, is plain teaching upon this subject. From this time the period under this fifth trumpet, the great empire of Satan begins to fall,

and suffers continuous shocks till it falls finally and for ever in the seventh period. I might place here the *fifth* vial: "The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues with pain." (Rev. xvi. 10.) That is, the vial was poured upon Rome, and upon the Romish beast: that which is now history, and of which we know so well. And so I might now pass on to the sixth seal. (Rev. vi. 12—17; vii.) To the sixth trumpet. (Rev. xi. 13.) To the sixth vial. (Rev. xvi. 13, 14.) To the seventh trumpet. (Rev. xi. 15.) And to the seventh vial. (Rev. xvi. from ver. 17.) And the fall of the empire of Satan would be seen to be continuous and complete. But let us follow the Divine arrangement of the prophecy.

13 *And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,*

14 *Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.*

15 *And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.*

16 *And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.*

17 *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.*

18 *By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.*

19 *For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.*

20 *And the rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:*

21 *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

Under this trumpet Roman territory is seen taken by the Mohammedans; the Mohammedan army is seen to be the same as under the last trumpet; the Roman States are seen subjugated and taken by the false prophet: that which we know did occur, and has occurred throughout the period under this trumpet, which is from the year 1332 to the end of the two thousandth year; and, therefore, I should say, throughout that part of it which has now elapsed. I cannot here go through the history of the Saracens, the immediate followers of Mahomet; suffice it to say they, like him, believed in the Koran, whose one great damning heresy was the unity of the God,—in opposition to idolatry, it is true; but, alas, it was the subtlety of Satan to obscure Christ: idolatry in one of the heretical bodies, and Christ excluded from the other! But the religion of Mahomet soon spread over nearly all Asia and Africa. And the Saracens reigned at Bagdad 620 years. But it was when the Romish beast was subjugated by the true Christian Church that the Ottoman empire, the Turks, extended their dominion on every side. It was the devil struggling for power in another direction. He would not lose ground in one quarter without a desperate effort to gain territory in another.

“Accordingly all Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Thrace, Macedon, Greece, and all the countries which formerly belonged to the Greek or eastern Cæsars, the Ottomans conquered, and subjugated to their dominion. They first passed over into Europe in the reign of Orchan, their second Emperor, in the year 1357; they took Constantinople in the reign of Mohammed, their seventh Emperor, in the year 1453; and in time all the remaining parts of the Greek empire shared the fate of the capital city. The last of their conquests were Candia, or the ancient Crete, in 1669, and Cameniec, in 1672. . . . The Turks even besieged Vienna in 1683, but they were defeated.” Another writer says, “During almost four centuries the Greeks were treated by the Turks like slaves.” This is only a glance at some of their depredations and victories, but enough to show the meaning of this conflict in the sixth period of 666 years.

But it may be asked here, Where is Protestant England, where the Reformed Christian Church of Christ all this time, that the victories of these heretics only should be seen under this trumpet? Because her emergence from the dark ages, and the convulsion of the Romish States, are seen under the *sixth* seal (Rev. vi. 12; vii.), so that the poor beast, Rome, has been the victim of both Turks and Christians. There is this peculiar feature under the fifth and sixth seals,—that there being no great overwhelming regal power of long duration to reveal, like those of the Assyrian, Grecian, or Roman, the page of ecclesiastical history, or of the spiritual foe, is revealed in its stead. Under the sixth seal and the sixth trumpet, the two great heresies of the fifth period are revealed; the spiritual alliance of the two beasts, and their deeds. Let us now look at the wars of the Mohammedan power against the Roman.

“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.” This voice from the four horns of the golden altar is a most appalling one. The fire upon that altar was an emblem of Divine justice under the law, as we have seen in the preface to these trumpets. “The angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth : and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” These were the judgments and the arrows of the law. And these are just what we now see go forth from the horns of the golden altar, the voice is God’s in Christ,—“the wrath of the Lamb,” as seen under the *sixth* seal. (Rev. xvi. 16.) “The judgment of the great whore,”—of corrupt Rome, as is seen in the codicil to this *sixth* trumpet. (Rev. xvi. 17.) The sword of eternal justice is sheathed in Christ, but if He be not received by the sinner, it is still turned against him : and who could bear the weight of eternal justice ? The *horns* of that altar were typical of Almighty power, a horn being the known emblem of power (Exod. xxvii. 1, 2) ; which power may be exercised for good or evil, in mercy, or in judgment. If my reader would see some instances of Jewish faith in those horns of the altar, let him turn to some passages. (1 Kings i. 50 ; ii. 28 ; Ps. cxviii. 27.) The power of them was in the One great Sacrifice of the altar of burnt offering who was to take away the sin of the world. And therefore this voice from Him could only be God’s.

His command was to the angel of the sixth church to loose the four spirits of prophecy against Babylon the Great, which were bound in the great river Euphrates. What was written of

ancient Babylon, referred also to Rome ; and if my reader will turn to some passages he will see the prophecies to be unloosed and fulfilled. (Jer. li. 7 ; xxv. 15 ; xvii. 28 ; xxix. 15 ; li. ; Isa. xiii. 1, 19 ; xxi. 19 ; Dan. v. 25, 29.) This is the time of the Lord's vengeance : He will render unto Babylon a recompense. Babylon hath been a *golden cup* in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken : the nations have drunken of her wine ; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed." This expression, "golden cup," is rooted in the golden pan or censer with which the fire was taken from the altar of burnt-offering. It has the same meaning as vial (Matt. xxvi. 39, 42) ; vials of the wrath of God are now to be poured upon Rome. But we must not forget that the first great vial was the fifth vial (Rev. xvi. 10),—her conflict with the Church of the Reformation, and her defeat. "Woe," has also the same meaning as cup, and vial (Matt. xxiii.) ; and we must remember, this conflict under this sixth trumpet is the second woe foretold by the angel under the fourth trumpet (Rev. viii. 13) : both alike were to fall upon "The inhabitants of the earth,"—upon those "of the earth, earthy."

God's command to Jeremiah further explains to us the meaning of His voice here : "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates." After foretelling by him the awful judgment that should come upon Babylon, He said, "When thou hast made an end of reading this book, thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates : and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and not rise from the evil I will bring upon her." (Jer. li. 63.) Now the spirits of the prophets ; or of the four Seraphim and Cherubim, the

Word of God from them, is again to go forth against Papal Rome, and she is further to fall under continued conflicts.

"And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men." The great river Euphrates, as relating to this period, is a mystical Euphrates, the great Mohammedan power, as under the *sixth* vial. (Rev. xvi. 12.) And the four angels, are four evil and avenging angels let loose by the word of prophecy. It is the avenging angel, "Whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon." (Rev. ix. 11.) When God commands, none can stay His hand : the Word may have gone forth, and may even still go forth from this very prophecy. "Prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year," refers to different periods in this 666 years in which the Turks have been victorious over the people, and States that had been in the possession of Papal Rome. In Rev. ii. 21, God says, "I gave her space to repent ; and she repented not." And this is the meaning of these periods : God gives cessation, space for repentance, even to the beast. "To slay the third part of men," means to wage war with them, more or less, during the third part of this dispensation of 2,000 years. And, therefore, as I have said, other provinces or countries may yet be conquered by the Turks and Arabian powers.

"And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand : and I heard the number of them." I take it, this number is simply representative, implying a very great number, which we now know the Arabian hordes to be ; who could have foreseen them but God ? He did this in Ishmael. (Gen. xvi. 12.) Oh, father of the faithful ! Sarah ! Hagar ! who but God could thus have seen the consequence of your sin and unbelief ?

"And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions: and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone. In this description the same figurative language is used as in the last trumpet, to show that the same hordes of heretics are signified. Their horses are the same, or here they have their heads like lions, to denote the old power, whose standard was, without doubt, a lion. (14.) The breastplates of fire, jacinth, and brimstone, reveal the darkness of the light of hell,—of idolatry and for not only was territory taken, but the multitudes of men now covering it are Mohammedan: "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

The Mohammedan power seeing the evil estate of Rome since the ban of the Reformation, seized the moment to pervade to wound still more the head of that beast. But in breaking up of Satan's empire, in this dissection of old spiritual powers, we shall soon see the fulfilment of other prophecies. "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."

The fire out of the mouths of the horses, whose heads are like lions, still denote Divine justice. It is said to issue from their mouths, simply to notify the Arabians, who are the enemies of their horses. "The smoke" signifies the darkness and confusion of those who fall under that Divine attribute, "There went up a smoke out of his nostrils." (Ps. 18:15) "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke." (Exod. 19:18) When faith is strong, clear, and calm, and the dis-

wholly sanctified, there is no fear, darkness, or dismay ; no smoke from the eternal fire of justice : however the element may rage around, the flaming sword is sheathed in Christ. Brimstone is also suffocating, and destructive of life ; and thus these emblems are employed here to portray the effects of apostacy and false doctrine ; for this army is the same hordes of false teachers we have seen under the last trumpet : ministers of justice sent by God. " Upon the wicked the Lord shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest : this shall be the portion of their cup." (Ps. xi. 6 ; Isa. xxxiv. 8—10 ; xxx. 33.) " My sword is bathed in heaven : behold, it shall come down upon the people of my curse, to judgment." These chapters should be read, and also 1 Kings xxii., with these awful judgments, to understand the conflict of the invisible spiritual world.

" By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths." The fire here, signifies " the spirit of error." In the Koran it is said to issue from the mouths of these false teachers, from the Scripture expression of the Word of God issuing from His mouth : " So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth." (Isa. lv. 11 ; xlix. 2.) " I will make my words in thy mouth fire." (Jer. v. 14.) The rapid spread of the religion of the false prophet, and its further increase in the beginning of these 666 years, are the key to this verse : " By these three was the third part of men *killed* by the fire." Spiritual death is here signified, and error was the cause of death. " And by the smoke : " by the darkness and confusion of that spirit of error. " And by the brimstone : " that is, by the doctrines of devils, the foul leaven of the

bottomless pit; of the "Hell" seen under the fourth; how dense and damning is heresy and idolatry! O God the Holy Ghost can break its chain, and dispel it. Oh, come thou fountain of life and truth, and fill it with the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, as it covers the seas.

"For their power is in their mouth:" in the false which proceeds from their mouth. "And in their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, them they do hurt." Without doubt a serpent was the of some of these ancient tribes: "The piercing serpent leviathan, that crooked serpent." (Isa. xxvii. 1.) In this book of the Revelation a serpent is made to this great Mohammedan power: "That *old* serpent, the devil and Satan." (Rev. xiii. 9, 15.) It is likely the of the ancient standard had the tail of the horse represented; and probably the head of a horse, as horses of the seventeenth verse have the heads of the lion. The poison of some serpents is in the tail, and in the heads, and they could only be killed by crushing the head; which is the meaning of God's expression to Satan, "seed shall bruise thy head." (Gen. iii. 15.) But in the description in the Revelation both species are significant, they have power to hurt both in their heads and in their tails. There is a mortal poison, whether of life or doctrine: "They are estranged from the womb. . . . Their poison is the poison of a serpent." (Ps. lviii. 3, 4.) Upon ancient standards we see these grotesque figures, and here we quite understand them as the standards of nations, and of the spirit of the old serpent, the devil. In what numberless for

revealed to us, that we may know him when he comes in, these his agents !

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood : which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.” It is true the Romish Church did, and does worship images, crosses, the Virgin, and saints ; but I do not think she is the *professed* idolater spoken of in this verse ; but that the verse is intended to reveal to us the old Pagan idolatress in Rome, in another guise,—the *professed* worshipper of Christ, but really this idolater still : the cross, the profane host, and the Virgin come between her soul, and God in Christ. The Sacrament of repentance and good works has taken the place of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and the actual righteousness of His Holy Spirit. The next verse refers to the old harlot in her more modern or more prominent features : “Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” She is the same in all ages : a thief, a persecutor, and a murderer, whatever visible form she may assume. But it is our duty and our calling to maintain before her the truth of God in Christ the Saviour of the world ; and the other grand fundamental truth,—that His Spirit only can make us holy. It is the will of God that she should be brought to repentance. Oh, that His long suffering might be salvation !

As we look back we do see this subjugation of the Romish power by the false prophet, but it is only another space for repentance for him : he is, as it were, surrounded with the light of Christianity ; and if he does not accept it darkness

will close upon him also. It was the religion of Mahomet to put down Paganism, idolatry, and to teach the doctrine of one true God ; but the doctrine of God in Christ, he rejected. How deep are the depths of Satan ! What fatal mistakes may even the most sincere and earnest make ! By the coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord, deliver all our fellow-men.

Three periods of 666 years would be 1998 years, which I shall show later will be in all probability the period of this dispensation. If we deduct 1878 from the 1998, there will remain 120 years. I have now brought down my reader under this trumpet to the moment we live in,—the year of our Lord, 1878. What lies in the remaining 120 years I do not know ; but I do know God is Almighty, and that the true Church has it in her power to bring down heaven to earth ; so that His Kingdom might come, and His will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. The sixth vial, the drying up of the Euphrates, closes the dispensation.

“ Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Come quickly.”

CHAPTER X.

THIS tenth chapter is one of the most mysterious in the Book of Revelation, while, to some extent, it seems to be a preface to the codicils which follow ; still, it is evident it has a deeper meaning.

1 And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud ; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire :

2 And he had in his hand a little book open : and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,

3 And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth : and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write : and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

6 And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the

things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer :

7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up ; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up ; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey : and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

I say, there is deep mystery in this chapter, lying as it does between the *sixth* and *seventh* trumpet. It seems to concern the very moment in which we live, and proclaims aloud to the Church of Christ defeat, a long and sore conflict ; or victory, and the immediate coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. While we read the mystery, let us listen to His voice : " Surely I come quickly." And let each heart respond, " Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

" And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud ;" this angel is the Lord Jesus Christ, but in some messenger by whom He is about to speak : the spiritual nature of every servant of His comes down from heaven. " Clothed with a cloud," means here, with mystery ; seventh

verse,—even with dark mystery. “And a rainbow upon his head:” this is the signal of covenant mercy, although the peal of judgment is heard in the voices of the seven thunders. “When I bring a cloud over the earth, the bow shall be seen in the cloud.” (Gen. ix. 14, 15; Ezek. i. 28; Rev. iv. 3.) It denotes also that the Being is “the everlasting Father. The mighty God” (Isa. ix. 6), unchangeable in mercy, even in the midst of judgment. “And His face was as it were the sun;” this notifies the glorious Shechinah of the Holy of Holies: “The Sun of Righteousness.” “And His feet as pillars of fire,” denote almighty strength: the Divine Being seen in Rev. i. 15, 16. All the attitudes He takes in His addresses to the Seven Churches (Rev. ii. 1, 8, 12, 18; iii. 1, 14, 17) are rooted in that first description of Himself; and so is this presentation of Himself here, that all the attributes of the Deity may be recognised.

“And he had in his hand a little book open;” this little book *open*, may be the codicils to the seals and trumpets that follow in the next four chapters; but although it is open, as the whole prophecy was to be, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which *must shortly come to pass*,” still, there was mystery in that open page; something *possible* to lie beneath the surface. “And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth:” the sea represents all heavenly things; and thus do we see the God of heaven and earth standing in His omnipotence; upon “His feet as pillars of fire,” ready to propound to the world a mystery,—something hidden, and yet revealed.

“And he cried with a loud voice, as when a *lion* roareth;” this was to denote the same Being as in Rev. v. 5, 6: “The

Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book." Something alarming, and much to be noted, seems intended by this expression: "A loud voice, as when a lion roareth." The prophet Amos employed the same language: "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos iii. 8.) "And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices." Thunder was the known symbol of prophecy: "Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like Him?" (Job xl. 9.) And so here, these seven thunders signified a roll of prophecy, open, yet still hidden; hidden, yet still revealed.

"And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." That is, the mind of the Spirit was to be sealed, the twofold interpretation that the prophecy admits of was not to be written. The seven thunders may also signify a seven days' economy beyond our own; but I believe primarily they did notify the twofold interpretations of which the prophecy admits.

"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God *should* be finished, as He hath declared to *His servants the prophets*." This is rooted in Josh. vi.: "The seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns," in the siege of

Jericho, were "the prophets" here referred to. "And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city." Thus we see how vague and how open these verses in the Revelation are left; how open to different interpretations. Christ swears by God the Father that there should be time no longer; but there is immediately added the problematical verse, "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, *the mystery of God should be finished*, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." So that what trumpet is referred to, is not defined. It may be to the one in order according to this interpretation of the Revelation; or the battle under that being lost, it may refer to a more extended period,—to the one typified by the seventh trumpet at the siege of Jericho, and to many other types throughout the Old Testament: "as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." But, "The mystery of God *should* be finished," seems rather to refer to the mystery under the seven thunders. Certainly there is a vagueness or uncertainty in these verses that can be accounted for in no other way. This *conditional* tense is very remarkable. But let the possible interpretation be as it may, the bare thought of it should urge us to strain every nerve, and faculty, and power for present victory.

"And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

"And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up;

and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

"And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

"And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

I must confess I do not like this chapter, lying as it does between the sixth and seventh trumpet; relating, as it evidently does, to the very moment in which we live. There is mystery in it; and it seems almost to stand distinct in its sublime mysteriousness. It can scarcely be said to be a preface to the codicil; but something hidden is revealed, some possibility broached that the Divine Dictator would fain not utter; something revealed that is concealed. God had said to John, "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." But now His command is as peremptory as the prohibition had been: "Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel:" that is, in the hand of Christ. "God sent and signified the Revelation by His angel unto his servant John." (Rev. i. 1.) And when Christ gave this little book to John, He said, "Take it, and eat it up." And John says, when he had eaten it, "It was in my mouth sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter." The meaning of this is, that Christ did abrogate the penalty of the law of transgression, and gave to us the Gospel in its completeness and sweetness; but when violence is done to that Divine Scheme, to Himself, justice rebounds to the offenders: the curse must be plied against them; they must *taste* its bitterness, suffer from its effects, to teach them the

truth of the Gospel of Christ, for themselves, and for others. Thus it was here, that John, the representative of the Church, was to taste the sweetness and the bitterness, and to suffer the result. But, mark. I do not say the penalty of the law was made valid. Oh, no. He who, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man (Heb. ii. 9), destroyed its force for ever. Its bitterness may be felt, the consequences of sin suffered for the removal of it and to compel the reception of the Gospel; but the penalty of sin was abrogated by Christ, and there is now no gulf—not a hair's breadth—between the sinner and the Saviour. It was added, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." A prolongation of conflict seems proclaimed; but I will proclaim again the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins in all its completeness, and say, there is no chasm, not a hair's breadth, between the believer and God in Christ—between sin and pardon. So that this prophetic voice of alarm in this chapter, still, and only says, "Flee from the wrath to come." Let Christ into the heart, even at the eleventh hour, and the world shall be saved.

"Surely I come quickly. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

CHAPTER XI.

THIS Eleventh Chapter is a codicil to the seals and trumpets down to the sixth trumpet, when the seventh is sounded. The interruption in the last chapter, relatively to time, being ended, the regular history proceeds, or rather some further explanations of the regular history, by the introduction of these codicils.

1 *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod : and the angel stood, saying, Arise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein.*

2 *But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not ; for it is given unto the Gentiles : and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*

3 *And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*

4 *These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.*

5 *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies : and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.*

6 *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod." This rod is the sceptre of Divine decree. But the expression is most remarkable: "*A reed like unto a rod.*" A reed was the known emblem of weakness, "Thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed." (2 Kings xviii. 21.) And Christ said of John, "A reed shaken with the wind." (Matt. xi 7.) That was, when John was cast into prison by Herod, his faith in the truth of Christ was for a moment shaken. (Matt. xi. 3.) These, reed and rod, were emblems of Divine decree, and free will, of God's unchanging love and purpose in His dear Son; and of man's changeable will, ever varying disposition.

But a reed was a Jewish measure of six cubits three inches, or three yards three inches; and the command to measure was from Christ Himself, from the angel who had the little book open in His hand. The measuring is of time, as it is in Zech. ii. 1, 2; Ezek., from the fortieth to the forty-seventh chapter. None but God can measure time. "The angel stood, saying, Arise and measure the temple of God." That was the Christian Church, in distinction from the ancient temple. Her period of office is decreed, although a resolute or irresolute exercise of free will may make her period of stewardship longer or shorter. "And the altar." That is, the time of each ministering angel. The command is rooted in the preface to the trumpets: "Another angel came and stood at the altar." And also in 2 Chron. iv. 1; Ezek. xxvii. 1. We have seen Abraham called, the prophets called, the Christian Church called, the English

Church called, the Reformed Protestant Church called; and this is the meaning here,—measure, or reveal these periods.

“And them that worship therein.” Divine worship and all the means of grace are for the health of the soul, and the day of probation for each individual is fixed, alike for the hearer, the minister, and for the body, the Church. This Divine decree should make us zealous in the use of time, and in the exercise of a free will.

“But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not, *for it is given unto the Gentiles.*” This court then without the temple of God, was the Jewish Church; her time of ministration at the holy altar had been measured, and had come to an end: “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” (Matt. xxi. 43.) “Your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matt. xxiii. 38.) “Measure it not, *for it is given unto the Gentiles.*” The holy city, the ancient temple, and the Jews as a nation, were then all given to the Romans to be destroyed. The words are rooted in Luke xxi. 24: “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles.” In the Jewish temple there were three courts. The first, called the court of the Gentiles, because they were allowed to enter so far, and no further; the second, the court of Israel, because all Israel, if purified, could enter there; the third, the court of the priests, where the altars of incense and burnt-offering stood, as seen in the preface to these trumpets (Rev. viii. 3—5), and where the priests ministered. Then were Christ’s words fulfilled: “Behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.” (Luke xiii. 29, 30.) The Jews had stood in the inner court of the temple of God, the Gentiles admitted only into the

er court ; but then many were to come from the east, from west, from the north, and from the south, to sit down in kingdom of God, and the Jews were to be thrust out. See Matt. xxii. 7, 8, 9.

And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and months." This holy city was the Christian Church, which then superseded, or succeeded the Jewish Church in office, The new Jerusalem," so often referred to in this book, in allusion to the ancient city. (Rev. iii. 12 ; xxi. 2—10.) She was then to be trodden under foot forty and two months. The next verse explains that these forty and two months mean 42 months, or 1260 years. Time under these trumpets is computed according to the Jewish annual feast of trumpets, a month signifying a year ; and thus, the 42 multiplied by 30, make the 1260 of the next verse. And thus the meaning here is, that the Christian Church should also be trodden down by the Romans 1260 years, dating from the destruction of Jerusalem, of the old Jewish temple ; during a period of 594 years, and a second period of 666 years : 1260. First by Imperial Rome, and again by Papal Rome. They are revealed to have been the same city,—Rome. And I think "Gentiles" here rather means nations, than the Gentiles called to faith in Christ, for they are men of as hostile destroyers of the *holy city* ; so that they ought not to be a part of what they tread under foot as vile and mean, of what they hate, and try to annihilate. To call the Christian Church is the most miserable misnomer that was ever given, the most sly, artful design of Satan that he made. There was a Christian Church established at Rome which stood her day, and was dispersed abroad upon the earth by God to propagate the Gospel ; but "the Gentiles" here

spoken of are Rome still,—the old Pagan, and the new Papal powers: “The old dragon with seven crowns upon his head” (Rev. xii. 3), “and the beast with seven heads.” (Rev. xiii.) Oh, my dear people, do not be deceived by this old enemy, if you do you will be ensnared into Rome again, and all the conflict of the past will be enacted over again.

But, it will be seen that there is a discrepancy of two years in this reckoning of these two periods of 666 years: they would make 1322 years, and with the 70 years to the destruction of Jerusalem deducted from them, would leave 1262 years, —making, as I have said, a discrepancy of two years from the number here given, 1260. And therefore we must suppose the period was dated from two years later than the destruction of Jerusalem,—from the beginning of some new persecution after the old constitution had been swept away. If we turn to the reigning Emperors of that period, to the dominating, persecuting spiritual enemy, this is very easy to understand. Nero died in the year 68; Vespasian in 79; Titus in 81; and Domitian in 96: so that the new persecution would be in the reign of Vespasian. He reigned ten years; he was engaged in wars against the Jews, many of the cities of Palestine surrendered to him, and he began the siege of Jerusalem, which his son Titus finished. So that, I say, it is very easy to understand the beginning of this new persecution against the Christian Church in the year 72 of the Christian era, which prevailed to the time of Wickliff, who was born *about* the year 1324. He was the first of the Reformers. The triumph of his cause lay in this,—that he went the right way to work, gave to the people the spiritual weapons that were mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan. If my reader will glance back at the

se, he will see that the prophecy was as clear as though it been written since: "But the court which is without the ple leave out, and measure it not, for it is given unto the tiles. And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty two months:" 1260 years.

And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they ll prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, hed in sackcloth." These two witnesses are the two urches of those two periods of 666 years. In Scripture the urch is thus constantly spoken of as a witness of, and for l (Acts i. 8; v. 32; x. 39—41; xxii. 15; xxvi. 16; 1 n v. 9.) Prophecy here has an extensive meaning; it udes preaching and teaching; from prophecy particularly may be, for the Christian Church did read and proclaim downfall of Imperial Rome, and of the Romish antichrist, a prophecy. She told them of the downfall of their Pagan em of idolatry, of their foul heresy, and of the illicit power r exercised with such cruel ferocity and unrelenting vigour. ist said of St. Paul, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to : my name before the Gentiles and before kings." (Acts ix. "And the night following the Lord stood by him, and , Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of Me erusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." (Acts i. 11; Rom. i. 7—15.) Suffice it here to say, God did give er to His agent, the Church, to be a faithful witness for , and to do His will, even after the time of St. Paul, down he year here noted, 1332. The thousand two hundred and escore days mean years, as in the preceding verse, and as zekiel iv. 6: "I have appointed thee each day for a year." ackcloth was a cloth made of hemp, and worn upon occa-

sions of mourning and great calamity. (2 Sam. iii. 21 ; 1 Kings xx. 31 ; xxi. 17 ; Ps. lxi. 11.) In this instance, it betokened both the trodden-down state of the Church and the great approaching changes in the affairs of the people amongst whom she preached and prophesied. First, I say, the clothing of sackcloth became the Church for herself : it was in unison with her persecuted and disembodied state. In xii. 6, it is written of her during the same period : "The woman fled into the wilderness : " that is, she was scattered over the world, and persecuted from place to place. Yes : the garment of sackcloth and "the spirit of heaviness" became her for herself, and for the people against whom she proclaimed such heavy judgments ; whose first decline and downfall were even then commencing.

God has thus set His Church, for ever a light in the dark places of the earth, in all the idolatrous Pagan cities of the world,—in Egypt, in Babylon, in Greece, in Nineveh. Then "the King of Nineveh arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes" (Jonah iii) ; and as we have seen her in Rome and in many nations during the dark ages and the supremacy of Papal Rome. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations ; and then shall the end come." (Matt. xxiv.)

"These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." This verse is rooted in Zech. iv. 2, 3, 14 ; Ezek. xxvi. 35 ; 2 Chron. xiii. 11 ; 1 Kings vi. 23, 28. "Within the oracle he made two cherubim of olive trees, each ten cubits high." They, like the four cherubim of this book, represented the Word of God and His agents, the preachers of it. And hence the repetition : "And

the two candlesticks,"—the two Churches of those two periods of 666 years, or of the 1260, dating from the year 72. "The seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven Churches." (Rev. i. 20.) "These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." (Zech. iv.) Not simply human agents, but Christ, and the Holy Ghost in them. "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so." (Ezek. xxviii. 14.) And thus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, are in truth the two true witnesses, as is revealed. (Rev. i. 5; ii. 13; iii. 14; Isa. lv. 4; John xviii. 37; Heb. x. 15; 2 John v. 7.) The Church is a duplex agent: without God in her, she is not His agent.

Mark what is further said of these two Churches, or witnesses. "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks *standing before the God of the earth:*" that is, called of Him to minister before Him in the most holy place of the spiritual temple; as when it is written, "Abraham stood yet before the Lord. Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord." (Gen. xix. 27; xviii. 22.) And Elijah: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, *before whom I stand.*" Oh, I repeat, it is an awful responsibility to be "the priest of the most high God" (Gen. xiv. 18); to stand before Him as the cherubim did in the Holy of Holies; the Antitype to inquire His will, and to do His will.

"And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." That is, as depositaries of the Word of God, justice and judgment proceed from their mouths if violence is in any way done to

them. "Go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from *my mouth*, the words of the Lord, in the ears of the people in the Lord's house." (Jer. xxxvi. 6.) "I will make my words in thy mouth fire." (Jer. v. 14 ; i. 9 ; Isa. li. 16.) "And if any man will hurt them." The meaning here is, if Satan in any agent accuses those whom God has justified: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." (Rom. viii. 33.) Let my reader read these sublime verses to the end of the chapter, and he will see the precise meaning of this verse. "He must in this manner be killed:" by the same fire of Divine justice by which he would destroy others. "He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy." (James ii. 13.)

The grand feature of this chapter is, that Christ, and the Holy Ghost in the Church, are spoken of as the Church ; and the Church, with Christ, and the Holy Ghost in her, as Christ, and the Holy Ghost.

"These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy ; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." That is, God the Intercessor, and God the interceding Spirit has power to do this : the human instrument could do nothing without the indwelling God. The verse is rooted in 1 Kings xvii. 1 ; xviii. 44—46 ; Ezra vii., from ver. 9. The Romish heresy sprung up in the bosom of the Christian Church ; pride, worldliness, and a dominating spirit was the origin of it : and Christ suffered it to develop, to take the form it did, for the subjugation of those base passions in His people. He had power to shut heaven that the rains

and dews of His grace should not fall copiously and gloriously during those 1260 years: no Pentecostal baptism marked the period, no coming of the Holy Ghost till they were ended. The power of Elijah was the type: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." And so all the waters of life were turned to blood during these 1260 years, just as were the waters of Egypt by the command of the Lord by Moses. I am quite aware of the success of the Christian Church for the first three hundred years, but still she was trodden down of the Gentiles as is here described.

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war upon them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

9 And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10 And they that dwell on the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

Mark well the period defined: "When they shall have finished their testimony." When the 1260 years, or the period measured by the angel, shall be at an end, when as faithful witnesses they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit,—that is the spiritual enemy seen under the *fifth* trumpet (Rev. ix. 1, 2, 11), in the last 666 years of these two periods,—the Romish and Mohammedan

enemies spiritually one, "Shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." The period here referred to was between Wickliff and Luther: it was one of conflict, of darkness, and most terrible slaughter; the true Christian Church was as it were killed; the two witnesses of the truth of Christ in its purity, as it were overcome, and slain in conflict; a few names only remained in Sardis who had not defiled their garments with one or the other of those heresies. The light of the first Reformers only flickered in the world's dense darkness, but it was destined to break the realm of that darkness,—to shine brighter and brighter unto a glorious day.

"And their bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." That is, in "the kingdom of darkness," of Satan; corrupt and dark, even as those heathen places were of old: and it was darkness that might be felt. Almost the whole world was then submerged, and it was in that empire of Satan that our Lord had before been crucified. There is importance attached to the expression, "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt;" the old spiritual kingdom of Satan is always the same, whether in Egypt, Sodom, Rome, or in these old Assyrian and Arabian powers, which are represented here by Egypt.

"And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves." These three days and a half are the same period referred to under the fifth trumpet (Rev. ix. 5, 10), which I there showed was a prophecy of this period in the *sixth* section of time. Five months multiplied by 30 make 150,—the three days or periods

here spoken of, meaning jubilee periods. The half day, twenty-five years, refers to a period between the utter submergence of the Church during the 150 years, and the emergence almost immediately revealed. (Rev. ix. 11.) The "five months," or 150 years, were of total torment from persecution, to enforce heresy by edict. There was just that period between Wickliff and Luther; so that the next twenty-five years were of the most terrible conflict,—of controversy; but they brought victory upon victory.

"And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." "The earth," twice mentioned in this verse, means the world in distinction from the Church. So this rejoicing is the triumph of the world over the Church in her weak, submerged condition. It was an ancient custom upon festive occasions to "send gifts one to another" (Esth. ix. 19, 22), and it is still preserved among many people. So that a universal rejoicing and merry-making over the Church of Christ, which was supposed to be completely overcome, and exterminated, is what is signified. "These two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth" signifies that the two Churches of the two periods of 666 years prophesied, or tormented by teaching, those not of the Church of Christ: proclaimed wrath against them. Now the state of affairs changes, and the two prophets, or Churches, rise into new existence.

11 *And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*

12 *And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them,*

Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud ; and their enemies beheld them.

13 *And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand : and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.*


14 *The second woe is past ; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.*

That is, after the 150 years prophesied of under the fifth trumpet, with twenty-five years added to them ; allowing for the emergence of the Church after her fearful submergence. So that these 175 years are of this sixth section of 666 years in which we live. If we add these 150 years to the 1,332 years, the two preceding sections of 666 years of this Christian dispensation, it brings it to the year 1482, and it is most likely Luther was born in this very year, for D'Aubigné says, Luther's mother did not know in what year he was born, but his brother thought in the year 1483, making a discrepancy of one year ; but as the precise year is uncertain, we may be sure the Creator created him in the year here foretold : and twenty-five years later the voice of God in him began to shake Christendom.

"And after *three days and an half* the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet ; and great fear fell upon them which saw them." This is rooted in the resurrection of dry bones in Ezekiel (Ezek. xxxvii.); but it relates to the true Church of Christ that had been triumphed over as overcome and extinct. "Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live. So I *prophesied* as he commanded me." Doubtless this word means, as in the Revelation,

preached, taught, and forewarned. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and *teach* all nations." (Matt. xxviii. 18.) "And the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army." What does this teach us? That we must teach, but that we must also rend the heavens by our prayers, that "the Spirit of life from God" may come down into the body—the Church. We must pray for, and look for, and wait for such a baptism, and it will come. Some life from the dead will appear, some shaking of the dry bones will be heard.

The resurrection of Lazarus is a fine illustration of these verses in the Revelation. Let my reader read the chapter carefully, and he will find it to be so. Lazarus was a type of the dead body of the human family. He was a type of the dead body of the Jews. Of every individual dead in trespasses and sins. And he was a type also of these two witnesses, apparently dead, and their testimonies worthless; of the Christian Church, in that the darkest moment of her history. And Christ comes to all, and says to all alike, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?" Yes, we do believe: we do believe that the power is of God, "the gift of God," sovereign, free, and independent of ourselves. Just as Lazarus rose from the dead by the command of the Almighty, and just as "the Spirit of life from God" entered into the body of the Reformers; so it must be again: the mass of the people must rise from the dead; the world must awake from the dead; the kingdom of God must come. And I believe this is what we may now expect if we are faithful to



maintain the truth of Christ: to overcome these beasts in their multifarious forms, by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of our testimony. Clouds are gathering, armies are gathering, a great conflict is to be fought, and we must fight as Luther and his army fought.

"And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." This was the voice of God in Luther; from *heaven* means from the community of God's true people. It is said in distinction from those without the pale of the Church, represented in this book by "the earth." "Come up hither," come up to the throne of God for yourselves, and not to the Pope, nor to priests; come up to all the privileges of the children of God, to the ordinances, to the holy spiritual estate from which you have fallen, to the visible constitution, to the unity of the Spirit, to the Church of which Christ is the head, to the fold of which He is the true Shepherd, to the holy of holies of the temple of God, where He is enthroned. "Come up hither." Oh, why cannot we come? Just because we cannot. "The Spirit of life from God" must come to us. This free and sovereign gift from God must come; we must pray for it, look for it, say with Jacob, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." We must look more away from ourselves, and more and more to Christ. Oh, "Spirit of life from God," come, and make us to hear Thy voice, that we may come to Thee. "And they ascended up to heaven in a *cloud*; and their enemies beheld them." In a *cloud* means in a great body, or number of people. Did not the body of the Reformers thus ascend to God? Did

not their enemies, the Papal power, thus behold them? Did not a Divine light break forth from behind the cloud, that the whole world beheld?

But it may be asked, How can "the Spirit of life from God" be said to enter into the communities of people who lived centuries before? For it is the two witnesses, the two Churches of the first and second section of this Christian dispensation, who are here spoken of. Because the Christian Church is one, she may be submerged for a season, undergo changes and transformations; but Christ in her is always the same, however few she may be in number; and this was the why and the wherefore of our glorious Reformation. The night of the Romish supremacy had been very long, and very dark, but the time had come in which Christ had appointed to appear, in which He had promised to retake the sceptre, and reign: as we have seen He came in the very year He said He would. "I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am He." (John xiii. 19.) Just as the Spirit of life from God will enter into the Jews,—not into those who lived at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, but into the body who will then be upon the earth,—so, whenever God through Christ returns to His Church after any submersion, there is this resurrection as palpable in those dead in trespasses and sins, and blinded by error, as it will be at the resurrection of the dead. When He spake that grand vital truth, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die," He said it as much in relation to the one as to the other. He is our life for time and for eternity, and we must believe it. "I am come that they might

have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John x. 10.)

"And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." This is not the earthquake under the *sixth* seal (Rev. vi. 12), that signifies the convulsion in the kingdom of the Romish beast from the triumph of the Reformation; but this refers to the spiritual disruption of the Romish and Mahomedan beast, as seen under the *sixth* trumpet. (Rev. ix. from ver. 13.) In the explanation of that trumpet I have shown that the conflict there seen was between those two powers: that the Turks did take many of the countries that had belonged to the Roman States—Egypt, Thrace, Macedon, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine. And thus it was foreshown, "*in the same hour there was a great earthquake:*" it occurred immediately upon the convulsion of the kingdom of the beast from the blow of the Reformation. Ten was a representative number in prophecy, and here the tenth part of the empire of Satan fell away. In the vision of "the judgment of the great whore," in Rev. xvii., this is more fully explained. "The *ten* horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." (Rev. xvii. 16.) I understand from this that the old Hebrew Abaddon rendered to the Gentile Apollyon (Rev. ix. 11) much territory that had belonged to him, till the will of God should be fulfilled and this disruption should come.

"The great whore" had sat upon many waters,—upon the sacred Jordan, upon "Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus," upon the Nile, and almost all other waters; for she is the old Pagan idolater of all ages; but now her territory is taken from her both by Turks and Christians. She is made naked, and burned with fire, "For strong is the Lord who judgeth her."

"The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly." I have shown these three woes relate entirely to the trumpets. The first was the submersion of the Christian Church by Rome,—the visible body of it,—for we must not forget the angel's cry, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of *the earth*." (Rev. viii. 13.) The second woe was the subjugation of the beast by the Christian Church, and by the ten horns, or Mohammedan power. And the third woe will be some great conflict under the seventh trumpet. Under the *sixth* Church we hear it said to the faithful, "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. iii. 10.) Under the *sixth* vial, this great Mohammedan power is dried up, perhaps converted to Christianity: who can tell? (Rev. xvi. 12.) Under the *seventh* seal, we hear the hymn of the Christian passover cease while some great conflict shall be fought. And then under the seventh trumpet we read of another great conflict in which the kingdoms of this world become Christ's. And again under the *seventh* vial we read, "It is done." But it is under the sixth vial that the gracious revelation is made to us: "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs out of the mouth of the dragon,"—of the old regal or imperial power,—“and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.” These powers may be Russia, Roman Catholic France, and

Spain ; and some modern power of the Hebrew Abaddon ; but whoever they may be, it behoves the Church to arm herself for these last conflicts ; to bear her faithful testimony before the whole world ; to supplicate God's help through Christ ; to be humble, holy, diligent, and zealous, and victory will be hers.

15 *And the seventh angel sounded ; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

16 *And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,*

17 *Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come ; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.*

18 *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great ; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.*

19 *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament : and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

The period under this trumpet is from the year 1998 of the Christian era to the year 2664, which period closes the seven periods of 666 years. We have seen the empire of Satan begin to fall under the fifth vial, again under the sixth seal, again under the sixth vial ; and now under the seventh trumpet some tremendous overthrow of error or idolatry, some great destruction of some other stronghold of Satan has taken place, for the

clamation of the gospel trumpet is, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." From the record we get to know whatever of the powers that fall: the last downfall of Satan's empire was the drying up of the Euphrates; but now we do not know what great powers they are that fall. But a great conjunction there is of some part of Satan's empire, and the kingdom of God is proclaimed gloriously victorious. The proper sequel to this trumpet is in Rev. xix. 11—16; and the remainder of the chapter is the codicil to the seventh vial. So that we see the conflict and the victory under this seventh trumpet are wholly of a religious nature, fought and gained entirely by spiritual weapons—by "the Word of God." These are the weapons of God's own appointment, and we never can be really successful and finally victorious by fighting with any other. They who fight with the sword must perish by the sword; but the everlasting Gospel "is soul-subduing, reconciling, and sure victory: it is the palm branch of peace, and "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

"And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God." I have taken from Rev. iv. 4 that these elders do represent the nation, the Divine Government, "the holy nation," "a peculiar people." (Matt. v. 22.) And hence this adoration before the throne of God, this prostration upon their faces and thanksgiving, when God is the Victor, the King, when He is through Christ the universal Lord, and all the kingdoms of the world are become His. "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and hast reigned." Here we see God

supreme, omnipotent, the one living Controller of the universe : He may, seemingly, for a moment lay down the sceptre, but He can retake it when He likes, and when He does so, as here, glory must be His. This manner of approach to God, "which art, and wast, and art to come," is rooted in Ex. vi. 3 ; iii. 14, 15. The elders worship the Unity in Trinity ; the Creator, who was ; the Redeemer, who is ; and the Restorer, who is yet to come. "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new." (Rev. xxi. 5.) This form of address had precisely the same meaning as Christ's designation of Himself: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (Rev. i. 8.) The same signification of Unity in Trinity is contained in the name JEHOVAH.

"And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great ; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." The voice of the elders in this verse is lucid in knowledge : they know from holy Scripture that the *seventh* trumpet having sounded, the end of all things is at hand, and that the empire of Sathan must now finally fall. They had read, "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God *should* be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." (Rev. x. 7 ; Dan. xii. 7.) The verse is a prophecy, added to the record of the glorious victory under the seventh trumpet, and it proclaims that the time of the resurrection is at hand ; the day of Judgment ; the time of the reward of the faithful ; and the destruction of those who

destroy the earth ; all of which are seen immediately to take place (Rev. xvii. 19, 20), only that some more interlying codicils to the regular history under the seals and trumpets somewhat interrupt the chain of events. The next verse is entirely a prophecy of the great Judgment day. Dear reader, pause and ask yourself, Did I ever think of it as so near? The voice of the seventh angel will soon begin to sound, and then that great day will come.

"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." The temple of God here opened in heaven means the chest beneath the mercy seat in the holy of holies, in which the tables of the law were deposited. (Ex. xl. 20, 21 ; xiv. 21, 22 ; Deut. xxxi. 26.) And there was seen in the chest "the ark of His testament,"—the sacred ark, which was a type of Christ, and in which the tables of the law were deposited. The law was laid up in Him, and He did fulfil it in His life infinitely beyond the bare letter ; and was also "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "And all who believe in Him are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." His righteousness is virtually imputed to them, and the actual righteousness of His Spirit given, while all their sin was borne away by Him. "Another book was opened, which is the book of life." (Rev. xx. 12.) This book is the book of the covenant of grace that was made with man at the time of the giving of the law (Ex. xxiv. 7, 8), because it was known that he could not keep the law, or even be justified by it. By Christ it was fulfilled : "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission

of sins." (Matt. xxvi. 28.) "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin." This is a most complete and consolatory doctrine. But this prophecy of the Judgment day in this verse treats entirely of the other side of the question. It was the book of the covenant of works that was laid up in the ark, that by which unbelievers will be judged, by which these beasts, whose deeds were deeds of darkness, will be judged: "The books were opened. . . . And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the book." And hence these lightnings, and voices, and thunderings in this prophecy; they are the same as on Sinai, emblems of the judgments and arrows of the broken law: the voice is the voice of God in judgment; and the earthquake and great hail, signify convulsion and enemies,—God's avenging angels, ministers of justice in the last vial poured out in the place Armageddon. For let us remember this prophecy is under the *seventh* trumpet, and there is but another moment before the scene is closed. "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth." (Rev. xvi. 15.) "And whosoever was not found written in the *book of life* was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx. 15.) Oh, let us not tempt God, let us not provoke Him; but most gratefully receive the imputed righteousness of His Son now, and the actual righteousness of His Holy Spirit; that we may be found of Him in holiness and peace then.

CHAPTER XII.

THIS twelfth chapter is a codicil to the seals, dating from the beginning of the Christian era.

1 *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven ; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars :*

2 *And she being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*

3 *And there appeared another wonder in heaven ; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.*

4 *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth : and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.*

5 *And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*

6 *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

7 *And there was war in heaven : Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ; and the dragon fought and his angels,*

8 *And prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven.*

9 *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world : he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

10 *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ : for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

11 *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

12 *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea ! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

13 *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.*

14 *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

15 *And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*

16 *And the earth helped the woman ; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*

17 *And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to*

make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun.” This woman was the Jewish Church, the faithful, true, hidden Church of Christ of the second dispensation: a woman throughout Scripture being the common emblem of the Church. “Clothed with the sun” means with the glory of “the Sun of Righteousness,”—in the imputed righteousness of Christ, and in the actual righteousness of His own Spirit: “Whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” And so here is this Church, which may refer to the last 666 years of the Jewish dispensation particularly; she who had been called, and justified in time, glorified in her finished course. The revelation seems made in distinction from the prophecy of the judgment-day under the seventh trumpet, where the book of the law is seen opened, that all whose names are not written in the book of life may be judged by it, whose judgment is certain condemnation. Oh, that I could teach the world this blessed doctrine of justification, and consequently sanctification by God the Spirit!

“The moon under her feet” means the corrupt Church, or the idolatrous woman seen in Rev. xvii. This also may refer to the gods of Rome, to the Pagan system of the 666 years before the coming of Christ; as it was under the *third* trumpet we saw that great Pagan false teacher fall, even into the community of God’s people. (Rev. viii. 10.) Here the Church has overcome the insidious persecutor; she has borne her testimony against error, and is seen with the spiritual enemy under her feet. But I think the Church of the three periods

of 666 years of the second dispensation is also signified by this woman. What had she not overcome! The Pagan idolatry of all nations: of Egypt, of the Canaanitish nations, of the Persian, Syrian, and Assyrian nations, of Greece, and Rome, down to the moment she stood there a mighty conqueror. If my reader will turn to only a few of many passages he will see how fearfully that people of God were involved in idolatry, and understand this God's gracious commendation of the conqueror; for it was the sin by which Israel fell (1 Kings xviii. 22—49; 2 Kings xxiii. 5, 8; Jer. vii. 18; ii. 28; xi. 1—20; xlv. 16, 25; Zeph. i. 4, 5; Acts vii. 42, 43.) The devil will always have a Church as well as a kingdom: heresy is the strongest of all his strongholds. What a gigantic system has Paganism been in the world's history! Grecian mythology and Papal Rome: it is against this last we have to guard; for God has revealed to us that the pit is bottomless. But look again at the portrait of this faithful woman; not only was the apostate woman overcome by her, but she had "upon her head a crown of twelve stars:" of Divine teachers, in distinction from the false teachers of the other system, the apostolic Church. Thus do we see what faithfulness may and ever will bring forth.

Neither was this all: here is revealed another, and a greater point of her faithfulness still. "And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." This her spiritual travail did bring forth the Messiah, the long promised blessing of the covenant. The cry of prophets, priests, and people, amounted to this travail so emphatically expressed: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isa. vii. 14.) "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." (Isa. ix. 6.) "Sing, O barren,

thou that didst not bear ; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child." (Isa. liv. 1.) "The desire of all nations shall come ; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Hag. ii. 7.) Was not this the travail here spoken of? And the whole of the Old Testament Scripture is of the same tenor.

I have frequently shown that all these codicils do date from the beginning of the Christian era, to explain further what was then in the future ; and so of this twelfth chapter, it dates from that period, and thus it is very easy to understand, what was then in the past needed no further explanation.

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven : and behold a great red dragon, having *seven* heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." This second wonder in heaven is the Roman Imperial Power at the end of the Jewish dispensation, at the time of the birth of Christ. Then the Jews, or those whom Christ called "The synagogue of Satan" (Rev. ii. 9 ; iii. 9), were so entirely allied with the dynasty of the Cæsars, —their government one, their policy one, and their worship of the dragon so completely one, and their surrender of the holy city to the Imperial enemy so entire, and his government so supreme, that he did stand in the very courts of the Lord's house, and reign in the midst of the community of God's people. And his spirit, the spirit of antichrist, was so entirely in the Pharisees, in the rulers of the Sanhedrin, in the chief priests and elders of the people, that as a usurper, he was as much seated in the heart of the Jewish nation, as in the heart of the pagan world itself. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, *standing in the holy place*, whoso readeth, let him understand."

(Matt. xxiv. 15.) He was a wonder there when the Incarnate God had appeared, and sought to be received. "Great red dragon:" this great red dragon notifies "The murderer from the beginning:" He who murdered Him who was an Incarnation of innocence and all virtue (Matt. ii. 3, 16; John viii. 40, 44); and who in this book is seen developed into the being "Death." (Rev. vi. 8.) A dragon is made an emblem of the regal enemy from Pharaoh the King of Egypt: "I am against thee, Pharaoh King of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers." (Ezek. xxix. 3; Isa. xxvii. 1.) "Having seven heads, and ten horns:" these seven heads reveal to us the spiritual enemy of the seven periods of 666 years; a head being the known symbol of a chief of a people (Micah iii. 1, 9, 11): and so the devil—who is signified by this dragon—is the chief ruler, or prince of this world. His ten horns represent all the kingdoms or powers under him, or under Imperial Rome at the beginning of the Christian era, ten being a representative number in prophecy, from the feet of the spiritual enemy, which had so often compassed the world. (Dan. ii. 33, 35, 41, 42.) Almost all the known world was at that time subject to Rome. "And seven crowns upon his heads:" this notification is to direct the attention of the reader to the fact that this great dragon is the same royal enemy as is seen under the seven seals: "A crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer." (Rev. vi. 2.) Thus I would have it particularly noted here, that this twelfth chapter is a codicil to the history under those seven seals, as the next chapter is a codicil to the history under the trumpets.

"And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." His tail here refers to the

end of his dynasty in the *second* dispensation. I have shown before the dynasty of the Nebuchadnezzars began precisely 666 years before Christ ; descending from the Assyrian to the Persian, Grecian, and Roman powers : these were the four beasts of Daniel, the fourth of which was dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly. It was in "the third part" of the Jewish dispensation that Rome did make havoc of the Church, and cast her teachers and rulers to the ground : all was corruption and disorganisation when Christ came.

"And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born." See that great red dragon Rome, standing ready to devour the holy child Jesus as soon as He was born. (Matt. ii. 3, 12, 16.) Moses was a type of Christ ; see also the same old enemy in Pharaoh ready to devour him as soon as he was born. (Exod. i. 8—10, 16—22 ; ii.) This pagan kingly power is seen in Revelation to be utterly obnoxious to God, and that because of the many evil passions growing out of it.

As is revealed under the second seal (Rev. vi. 4), "power was given to him to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another." Pride, jealousy, envy, covetous desires, and eagerness to rival each other, are all engendered by it. And the people of God imitate the world. "We will have a king over us ; that we may be like all the nations." (1 Sam. viii. 6, 19.) So that their peculiarity, Divine estate, and subjection to the government of God by the Word, are lost before the world. Who knows what may fall beneath illegal authority, if the Incarnate God fell before the devil in a Cæsar, a Pilate, and a Herod ?

"And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule *all*

nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne." This man-child was Christ, because the verse is rooted in the prophecies concerning Him. "Thou art my Son ; this day have I begotten Thee." "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron ; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Pa. ii. 7, 8, 9 ; Isa. xi. 1—4.) This rod of iron is the sceptre of justice ; but Christ only rules by it when men do despite to the Spirit of His grace ; when nations rise up against His government, and rebel against the holy, peaceful laws of His kingdom, which are equity, justice, and grace alike to all. "Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." (Luke xix. 27.)

"And her child was caught up to God, and to His throne." See "the Son of man," the Redeemer God ascending. (Mark xvi. 19.) See Him there. (Acts ii. 33.) "Therefore let all know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ." That is, the Supreme Governor and Ruler of the whole universe, for this is the meaning of the word Lord : the three Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity are included in it. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i. 33.)

"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." It will be seen in a moment that this period is the same as in Rev. xi. 2, 3, for 1260 years. The 594 years of the first section of this Christian dispensation dating from two years later than the destruction

of Jerusalem ; and the 666 years of the second section, down to the year 1332, or to the dawning of the Reformation by the translation of the Scriptures by Wickliff. During that time a wilderness life was hers. The language is rooted in a fact of past history,—that of the Jewish Church being driven into the wilderness when upon the very border of the promised land, where she was fed with manna from God for forty years, which was a type of the spiritual sustenance here signified. “We went through all that great and terrible wilderness.” “Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water ; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint ; who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might humble thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.” (Deut. i. 19 ; viii. 15, 16.) Ever after that event of affliction and trial a wilderness was the known emblem of general desolations. (Isa. xxvii. 10 ; xli. 18 ; Jer. xxvi. 6 ; 1 Cor. x. 5, 6.) And so it was with the Christian Church : she was not only dispersed in the three quarters of the world, but she was driven into this island, which was then in a worse state of idolatry and barbarism than any country of the present day. But what was added is most striking, “where she hath a place prepared of God.” Paganism gave way to Christianity, barbarism gave way to civilization ; and the British Isles became the beautiful home of the Church of God.

“That they should feed her there :” that is, that “the two witnesses” should feed her there. Wherever the community of God’s people may be driven, the ordained ministry must feed them with the truth of the Gospel of Christ, with spiritual

sustenance ; just as Moses obtained from heaven manna in the wilderness. "The bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." (John vi.) When Christ came, His kingdom was not ripe for glory ; God the Spirit must finish the work given Him to do.

It is seen clearly that this woman who fled into the wilderness was not the Jewish Church ; the 1260 years have more than transpired, and there has been no such spiritual resurrection as is seen to take place in Rev. xi. 11, 12, at the end of that period. No : the prophecy was of the Christian Church : "The holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." First Imperial Rome for 594 years, and then Papal Rome for 666 years ; and still for 150 years before the voice of the valiant servant of the Cross was fully obeyed : "Come up hither."

"And there was war in heaven : Michael and His angels fought against the dragon ; and the dragon fought, and his angels. And prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven." Heaven, throughout this book does signify the community of God's people, in distinction from the world without the pale of the Church. "Michael," means Christ, as the name does wherever it occurs in Scripture. (Dan. x. 13—21 ; xii. 1 ; Jude 9.) "The dragon and his angels," meant Imperial Rome and its legions. Between the two armies there was this war ; which may refer to the whole conflict from the birth of Christ, down to the decline and fall of Imperial Rome. "Michael and His angels," meant Christ, and Him in the Church. We have only to read the Acts of the Apostles, the 4th chapter alone, to see this war in heaven ; that is, the beginning of that war which lasted, more or less fiercely carried on, for 666 years. The persecution of the early Christian Church

by the powers of Rome, was a black, bloody page of history. Let us read it as here foretold.

Two subjugations of the Imperial enemy were here plainly foretold. The first may refer to the conquest of Christ over Rome by His resurrection and ascension into power and glory : "The dragon prevailed not ;" and the dispossession of the Romans of the Holy Land by the Turks : "Neither was their place found any more" in heaven. And the second subjugation refers to the fall of Imperial Rome : "and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan ;"—that is, the Imperial power was overcome, and his pretensions completely set at nought. The *serpent* of this book does represent the mystical Euphrates, all the Arabians, Assyrians, Turks, Saracens, and Mohammedans, from Ham (Gen. x. 6, 9, 11) and Ishmael, downward ; and therefore the meaning here is that this spiritual enemy in *Imperial* Rome is the old *regal* enemy of the world's history ; the very same who was in the dynasty of the Nebuchadnezzars, in the Persian and Grecian powers. The notification is to the four beasts, or to the one spiritual enemy revealed by Daniel. (Dan. vii.) "Devil," means the Apollyon of the Greek tongue ; and "Satan," the Abaddon of the Hebrew tongue. (Rev. ix. 11.) "That *old* serpent, called the Devil, and Satan." I have said this 12th chapter is a codicil to the seals ; there, under the *fourth*, which is the same period of time we are now going through, this same being, or regal despot is revealed under the name of "Death," the destroyer. Suffice it to say, in all these cases, it is the evil spirit who is revealed : in the regal form he attains to more power than he possibly could in any other. Now, mark what is added, for the divine, warning voice is most striking : "Which *deceiveth the whole*

world." There never has been but One Being upon this earth who was not, more or less, some time or other, deceived by the "Devil" in this character, and that was Christ. "The prince of this world" He rebuked, despised, and most faithfully exposed. "Get thee hence, Satan" (Matt. iv.), and "Get thee behind Me, Satan" (Matt. xvi.), were ever the watchwords of His soul. When David was deceived by this adversary, and swerved to temporal dominion, God gave rein to the enemy and suffered him to stand up and tempt David, to bring him back to the spiritual theocracy over which he was appointed. (1 Chron. xxi.) After the millennial reign of Christ He will let loose this regal foe, even upon "the beloved city," to try its loyalty, to see if His people will swerve again, to see if they can be deceived any more. But no : having tasted the sweets of peace, of loyalty to their Head, they will fall away no more. (Rev. xx. 7—10.)

This deceiver, Imperial Rome, "was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Why cannot we learn wisdom by these falls? by these mighty victories of the Church of Christ in her weakness, dispersed, and wilderness estate! and say with the Apostle, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

Not only was the Imperial power thus crushed, but Constantine was converted to Christianity; and had the Christian Church been as zealous, as holy, as humble, and as bold to maintain the truth in her strength as she had been in her weakness, she might then have wooed and won the world.

"And I heard a great voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

Was there not this thanksgiving and rejoicing in the community of God's people when that autocrat and despot, Imperial Rome, fell? Then came salvation and strength, and the kingdom of God was established in Great Britain, which before had been in His possession. "The *accuser* of our brethren," is a reference to the judicial processes that were carried on against the early Christians, by which thousands were condemned to imprisonment, and to the most monstrously cruel deaths. The expression seems rooted in Job i. 11, 12; ii. 1, 4, 5, where Satan in his false friends accused him before his God. Job was a type of the Church of all ages. Unbelievers say to God, You justify this man or this woman,—he is not perfect, he is a sinner; and God answers, Yes,—but I can be just, and the Justifier of the weakest believer; and the accuser is silenced, defeated, foiled: and hence the next verse.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." Yes, we have no other defence, no other plea against the accuser, no other answer to make to the demand of justice; but it is all sufficient: the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, and the sinner is acquitted. "And," it is added, "by the word of their testimony," by their stanch adherence to truth: this refers to the conflict with Pagan religion, which was the stronghold of the devil. Few readers are sufficiently well read in history to know of the seas of blood through which the Church has waded, the principalities and powers of darkness with which she has had to contend, and therefore they cannot appreciate rightly this striking language. The following sentence is a reference to the martyr deaths of thousands in defence of that truth: "They loved not their lives unto the death." At what a cost do we enjoy the blessedness of the Christian religion! may we be as

strong to preserve it pure as the early Christians were to establish it in its purity. Well might the angel add : "Therefore, rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them,"—that is, all the community of God's people. And fifteen hundred years afterwards we do rejoice and laud those holy martyrs.

"Woe to the inhabitors of the earth, and of the sea ! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." This is a prophecy at the end of this history of the first 666 years of this Christian dispensation, just as we have seen omens, and prophecies at the end of each history throughout this book. Or rather a prophecy appended to prophecy. It is the same prophecy appended to the regular history under the *fourth* trumpet, which is the same page of history as that we have just gone through,—the first 666 years of this dispensation. There the cry is, "*Woe, woe, woe* to the inhabitors of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound." Here the cry is, "*Woe* to the inhabitors of the earth and of the sea ! for the devil *is* come down unto you." I say, it is the same prophecy of the Romish Antichrist of the next 666 years. The *first* of the three woes proclaimed under the next three trumpets. But the notification is most remarkable : "The devil *is* come down unto you." The devil did craftily glide from the Imperial to the Papal power, as is again revealed in the codicil to the trumpets : "The dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." (Rev. xiii. 2.) And St. Paul said, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." (2 Thes. ii.) The Romish Antichrist did spring up in the bosom of the Christian Church : when prosperity and ease, and alliance with temporal authority were hers, she assumed the sceptre of the

temporal head, and became Romish. "The devil,"—that is the Apollyon of the Greek tongue, or the Gentile head (Rev. xi. 2),—"is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." This page of history lies under the fifth trumpet (Rev. xi. 9—12): there we find this spiritual ruler, or teacher, indoctrinating all with heresy who have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And the more ferocious, as it says here, because he knoweth he hath but a short time. And so in the *sixth* period we find him vanquished, and the Church ascends to a height of glory she had never known before.

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child." To understand this we must fix the period here referred to. The first eleven verses in this twelfth chapter are a codicil to the first 666 years of this Christian dispensation. The twelfth verse, as I have shown, is a prophecy appended to that history, of the black page of history in the next 666 years. And then this thirteenth verse, with the fourteenth and fifteenth, are a codicil to that period,—that is, to the regular history under the *fifth* seal. (Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11.) But under this seal there is no regal or Imperial enemy seen, because the Roman Imperial power has ceded his power, seat, and great authority to the Romish beast (Rev. xiii. 2); and thus the history under the seal, and the trumpet, are both alike ecclesiastical: so that we may read this codicil by the light of both.

Whether the dragon of this verse means the spiritual enemy in the old Roman dragon migrated into Rome ecclesiastical, and in her was the persecutor of the Church; or whether it is a reference to the regal power that again arose, and usurped

authority over her, I do not know. The Emperors of Germany were Romish, the Kings of England were Romish ; and they did too often persecute and help the Papacy to persecute the little hidden undefiled flock of the fold of Christ, that was not Romish, in order to coerce her to unholy alliance. Imperial Rome had fallen: "He was cast unto the earth;" but "Lucifer," the fallen angel, was not dead. "That *old* serpent, called the devil and Satan, *which deceiveth the whole world*," was not extinct: he again enthroned himself over many nations. The Saracen empire lasted 620 years, down to the year 1258 of the Christian era ; and God's ancient people were most cruelly treated by them, and almost all other nations. But this woman seems rather to refer to the true hidden Church, the same in all ages, whether Jewish, of Jewish extraction, or Christian. She, the spiritual mother of our Lord, is ever the object of the devil's persecution.

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." To what period this particularly referred I do not know, but without doubt to one of the two mentioned under the *fifth* trumpet (Rev. ix. 5, 10), to which history I have said these three verses are a codicil, together with the history under the *fifth* seal. For a time, means for fifty years ; "and times," two periods of fifty years, or jubilee periods ; "and half a time," for twenty-five years : making together 175 years. I have said the period in Rev. xi. 9—11 refers to the time between Wyckliff and Luther, but I do not think this is the same. Suffice it here to say, these "two wings of a great eagle" signify a power. The figurative

language is rooted in Ezek. xvii. 3—6 ; which was a prophecy of the Gospel being brought to Great Britain by the Roman power itself,—by the very power that was employing every means to annihilate it. And so in the time of the Romish persecution on the Continent multitudes did fly into England from every part, so that it was called “The Asylum Christi.” And bringing with them all their trades, arts, manufactures, and knowledge upon many subjects, the influx of people brought about a state of civilization for England it had never known before. Thus wonderful are the ways of Providence : “That she might fly into the wilderness, into her place.” England was then a wilderness to her : but was it not “her place,” to be her home ? Could she have seen her future glory, how joyously would she have crossed “the seas !” But I leave my reader to fix this period for himself ; for from the remarkable language, “That she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, *from the face of the serpent*,” one would almost suppose the period refers to the time in which the Holy Land and the Holy City were in the possession of Christians when taken from the Turks by European powers. It is said in those crusades not less than two millions of people lost their lives. The next verse rather favours the supposition that that was the period foretold : “And the *serpent* cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.” The Turks did retake the holy places that had been taken from them, and to the present time they are in their possession. But be this as it may, a time of great affliction and persecution for the Church was foreshown by both the regal and Mohammedan powers ; from whom she

was to be protected for a short time, and to be nourished with the spiritual sustenance of Divine truth by the parent body. We have only to look under the fifth trumpet to understand this water as a flood out of the mouth of the *serpent*: it was the heresy and corruption that flowed from the hordes of teachers of the false prophet. The regal leaven is also there revealed: "They had a king over them;" and his Hebrew and Greek name notify both the Saracenic and Turkish regal powers, and the Roman imperial power transmigrated into the Romish pontiff. Ishmael was a Hebrew.

The verses are a codicil to the *fifth* seal, and the *fifth* trumpet, and are as easily understood as is the regular chain of history.

The next, the 16th verse, is a codicil to the *sixth* seal, and a reference to the *sixth* trumpet; for we must remember they are both the same page of history.

"And the *earth* helped the woman, and the *earth* opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." By "the *earth helped* the woman,"—that was, helped the Christian Church,—is here meant, the disruption between the Romish and Mohammedan beasts under the *sixth* trumpet. (Rev. ix. from ver. 13.) I have there shown how many countries belonging to the Greek or Eastern Cæsars were subjugated to the dominion of the Ottoman empire; Mohammedan power overcame the Roman power; how they had been spiritually allied we do not know, only as it is revealed to us in this book. "And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the *dragon* cast out of his mouth," refers to the *earthquake* under the *sixth* seal (Rev. vi. 12), which was an emblem of great convulsions, and change of affairs; here it

signifies the downfall of the Papal Pontiff, and of Papal Rome : of the victory of our glorious Reformation. Mark the striking words, the change of affairs, "swallowed up the flood which the *dragon* cast out of his mouth." That was, the flood of heresy which the Romish Pontiff cast out of his mouth, showing that he was spiritually the old Imperial power ; or rather, it refers here to the old Pagan Idolater, which was supported by the regal power ; this history being ecclesiastical. Under the last seal and trumpet the flood had been cast out of the mouth of both these beasts ; but the Romish beast was the first to fall ; and we must remember this verse brings us to the very moment in which we live, and that the drying up of the mystical Euphrates, or the subjugation of the second beast, is the next great change in the affairs of nations that is to take place. Oh, that the whole body of that numberless people might be converted to Christianity, and the Jews also ; the land be amicably divided, and the whole countries of the East become the garden of the Lord ! With man this is impossible,—the devil is an enemy too implacable,—but with God all things are possible. Then let us pray for the coming of Christ, and a Pentecostal baptism.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." As we have seen a prophecy at the end of each page of history, so this verse is a prophecy of the conflict seen under the seventh trumpet (Rev. xi., from ver. 15) ; and in the codicil to this trumpet, in Rev. xix. 11—16, in both of which "the Word,"—the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church,—is seen to be gloriously triumphant. The prophecy may also refer to the

last great conflict under the *seventh* vial, that for which an evil spirit out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, are seen to gather together to fight under the sixth vial. (Rev. xvi. 13, 14.) We do not know what powers these may be ; but they may be France, Russia, Spain, and others ; for these were out of the mouth of the dragon, and of the beast. Christ will keep His hidden ones from that hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. (Rev. iii. 10, 11.) "Behold, I come quickly : *hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*"

CHAPTER XIII.

THIS chapter is a codicil to the trumpets ; it dates from the beginning of the Christian era ; and it is a revelation of the Romish and Mohammedan beasts.

1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion : and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed : and all the world wondered after the beast.

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast : and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast ? who is able to make war with him ?

5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies ; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to

blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

7 *And it was given to him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

8 *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

9 *If any man have an ear, let him hear.*

10 *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and faith of the saints.*

11 *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth: and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.*

12 *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*

13 *And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven in the sight of men.*

14 *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*

15 *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

16 *And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads;*

17 *And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

18 *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea.” This is rooted in Dan. vii. 2, 3, where the four beasts, the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, were shown and foreshown to him. Here the Divine intention is to direct the reader to the fourth of those four beasts, to show him that this beast now in being, is the same, Imperial Rome, full blown, and in full power: but in the opening of these verses the beast is the Romish antichrist, mystically one with the dragon. “Having seven heads,” that is, the same Spiritual being of the seven periods of 666 years. The same great red dragon as is seen in Rev. xii. 3: it is also the same period, the beginning of this Christian era; but that chapter is a codicil to the seals, and this to the trumpets. “And ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns.” A horn was an emblem of a power, and these ten with ten crowns represented all the kingdoms under the dominion of Imperial Rome at the time the vision opens, the beginning of the Christian era. Ten was a representative number in prophecy, from the toes of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw. (Dan. ii. 33—42.) “And upon his heads the name of blasphemy.” This name signifies absolutely a false god, and reveals to us in a moment the old pagan idolater, the ecclesiastical beast in mystical union with the dragon,—the corrupt Church supported by a corrupt Government. Perhaps few persons have taken the trouble to compass the subject of pagan religion: from the earliest ages

that system has been enormous. The Egyptians worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, the sacred crocodile, the ibis, and the Nile. The Canaanites were the grossest idolaters. The first commandment was against the sin of idolatry. "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." (Exod. xx.) The Assyrians and Persians were idolaters; and the mythology of Greece and Rome was one of the devil's strongholds. The Israelites were gross idolaters; Aaron, the high priest, was an idolater; Laban had his household gods. Elijah was raised up to conflict with the worshippers of Baal. Solomon fell away to idolatry. And our blessed Saviour, our incarnate God, was thought to work miracles by Beelzebub, the god of flies, or Pluto, the god of hell, the prince of the devils. (Matt. xii. 24—27.) And there was the Diana of the Ephesians, "who all the world worshipped." But I cannot here even glance at the world's system of idolatry: it has ever been gigantic. My reader may turn to a few passages (Judges xvii., xviii.; Jer. vii. 18; ii. 28; xi. 12, 13; xvi. 20; xlv. 16—18; Zeph. i. 4, 5; Acts vii. 42, 43). But if he would have an idea of it as it has ever been, he should read the Scriptures for this purpose, with classical history, and he would see this mystical beast or false god so graciously revealed to us. The models of heathen deities reserved to us in our time are an appalling picture if we would contemplate them in the spirit we ought. And then the idolatry of heathen nations, and the enormous systems of false religions to the present time, are fearful to contemplate. But in this 13th chapter is one of the most deep and gross impositions that was ever practised upon the world.

This name blasphemy upon the *seven* heads does denote the

Lucifer who said, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne *above the stars of God*. . . I will be like the Most High." (Isa. xiv. 12.) "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." (2 Thessa. ii.) All the false deities we have seen were titled with the name of gods, and supposedly endowed with the prerogatives of God. Nebuchadnezzar made an image to himself, and caused it to be worshipped as a god: and this chapter is very greatly rooted in that history. Daniel, in his prophecy of this beast of the Apocalypse, said, "He shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods." (xi. 36—38.) When Christ declared Himself to be the Son of God, the high priest said, "He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard His blasphemy." (Matt. xxvi. 65, 66.) "For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." (John x. 33—36.) The Roman Catholic Church not only arrogates to herself the attribute of infallibility, but of supreme authority, with liberty to exercise it as she will, independent of Divine government by the Word of God; in short, to rule and reign an absolute spiritual sovereign: this is blasphemy. Undue assumption of power is, at all times and in all bodies, blasphemy, obnoxious to Divine justice,—to God as an equitable Ruler, whose purpose of love is to raise mortals to His throne to be one in glory with Himself. (Rev. iii. 21; xxii. 5.) The pretension of that Church to work miracles is blasphemy: her absolute power over life and death is blasphemy; her worship of the Virgin is

blasphemy; her exaction of worship is blasphemy (Rev. xiii. 15); her self-glorification and deification is blasphemy. But there is a unique name she has given herself, that is I think above all others this "name of blasphemy,"—the Christian name,—the old pagan Church, Christian! With all her self-idolatry, with hell in her heart and blood in her hand, she named herself Christian. Christ said, "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." (Rev. ii. 9.) The most odious and the most execrable of all sin is to profess Christ,—to call ourselves Christians, while we are of the world and of this Church of Satan. The Roman Catholic Church is the old stronghold of Satan: "and the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." "Full of names of blasphemy." (Rev. xvii. 3.) Oh, I would have the Christian Church beware how she suffers that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess! (Rev. ii. 20.) Here Christ reveals the oneness of the old and the modern dynasty.

"And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." The forms of this beast are the same as of the four beasts of Daniel (Dan. vii. 4—7); intended here to notify the same spiritual enemy; or, as he is revealed in Dan. xii. 12, at the time of the fall of Imperial Rome. "The devil is come down to you," which I have shown was a prophecy of the spiritual enemy migrating from Rome Imperial to Rome Papal. "The dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." The verse is strikingly worded: the forms of the three ancient standards, Assyrian, Persian, and Grecian;

and the beast which John saw was the fourth, the Roman. But the mystical, ecclesiastical beast of the regal power is what is here so marvellously revealed. And also in Rev. xvii. : "I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns."

"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed : and all the world wondered after the beast." This head as it were wounded to death was the pagan head of the first 666 years of this dispensation. The Christian Church had as it were overcome it : "the spirit of truth" had as it were wounded it to death. Constantine was converted to Christianity, and all bade fair that the kingdom of God should be established in the earth ; but Rome was still Rome, and it sprang up again in the bosom of the Christian Church. Rivalry and jealousy for power was the root of bitterness that laid again the foundation of Rome, and thus Rome pagan became Rome papal : the *pagan* head wounded to death was healed ; for in this chapter it is ecclesiastical history we are reading. The beast is the mystical confederate of the dragon, as in Rev. xvii. the woman is the paramour of the beast : one spiritual nature, ever acting and transforming itself to deceive man. "And all the world wondered after the beast." The Romish beast was a world-wonder ; and as his ten horns did foreshow, almost all kingdoms were submerged beneath the boiling billow of his corrupt doctrine. The adoration of the cross, the worship of relics—of the Virgin, prayers to saints, confession to priests and their power to give absolution from sin, to sell indulgences, the sacrament of fasting, mortification, and penance, together with the law of forbidding to marry, were some of the corruptions of that

gross fraud. I repeat the truth : it was the pagan idolater under another form. To suppress the Word of God, the light of the people and our only rule of life, was its object. While there are any other gods but God it is a false system.

“And they worshipped the *dragon* which gave power unto the beast : and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast ? Who is able to make war with him ?” I have shown how the regal element immediately sprung up again in the Romish States. Kings were the vassals of Rome, and Rome was the vassal of regality : while the people worshipped the one, deceived by its assumptions and pretensions to infallibility, the other was *deceived* by its splendour and subjected by its power. Thus did the spirit of the people fail before the two incarnations of the evil spirit, the idolater and the usurper : “Who is able to make war with him ?”

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.”

Who gave him this mouth ? Not God ; evil cannot come from Him : some antecedents of human history must have been the producing cause. God in Providence sometimes gives power to the evil one against His people ; but He never would have done so if they had not given place and power to the evil one themselves ; because He is absolutely holy and righteous ; there is no evil in Himself, and none can come from Him. When by Providence He suffers a train of evil, it is because His people have departed from His government by the Word : they are not in Christ, “the Word,” and that Word is not in them,—so that they have themselves sown the germ that is the producing cause of the train of evil.

These "Forty and two months" are the same as in Rev. xi. 2—3, which chapter I have shown is a codicil to the seals and trumpets. The same period is intended,—1260 years, dating from two years later than the destruction of Jerusalem,—from the dissolution of the old constitution, or rather from the beginning of some new persecution after that event,—down to Wyckliff. Thus we see that the Pagan idolater was one with the Romish beast, the same being, for the words are, "Power was given unto *him* to continue forty and two months:" not to the dragon,—but to *him*, the beast. Oh, let us not be deceived, nor countenance in any way this enemy, that which calls itself the one universal or Catholic Church: she is the old Pagan idolatress of the world's history; the Balaam of Pergamos, and the Jezebel of Thyatira, the very god Baal of the Zidonians. (1 Kings xvi. 31.)

"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." This verse refers to the anathema of the Pope, to the curse with which he curses all who will not acknowledge his supremacy, "who *opposeth* and exalteth himself above *all* that is called God;" this is this dreadful blasphemy.

"And it was given him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." This is the same language as in Rev. xi. 7, when the two witnesses of the first and second periods had finished their testimony the beast made war against them, overcame, and killed them. This dreadful page of history is now in the past: I need not go through it here; suffice it to say millions died of every cruel sort of death, as it is written of the period under the Pagan beast in the 666 years before: "In one

province alone, 150,000 Christians perished cruelly—sometimes 100 in a day, 17,000 in a month.” It was intended entirely to blot out Christianity from the earth, and medals were struck by Diocletian, with this motto: “Having everywhere subdued the Christian superstition, and restored the worship of the gods;” I say, as this is written of the period under the Pagan beast, so the same black page might be written of the dark ages under the Romish beast.

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” But even in that dark moment there were found those who would not worship him, whose names were written in the book of life: “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.” (Rev. iii. 4.) Oh, what encouragement to persevere; what hope and reward for the poor Christian!

“If any man have an ear, let him hear.”

“He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity:” that is, he who in any way tampers with this corruption, or leads others into it, shall be ensnared by it: the warning voice is to keep clear of it; and this we should most cautiously do. “He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword:” that is, that this warfare may not, and cannot be carried on with carnal weapons; truth, truth, truth, and truth, the truth of Christ in its purity, the Gospel of His grace in its all-sufficiency, must be extended even to Rome,—held up before those who are so blinded, so grossly deceived; and they will

overcome, for they are all-subduing. It is not the will of God that any should perish, but that all should come unto Him and live. "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." It is this patience and faith that we want. More gentleness, forbearance, humility, and real love to souls would do wonders; and souls snatched from that pit of destruction would be precious to God. Although He has painted the sins of heresy and idolatry in these appalling colours, they are not beyond His power to forgive them. If we would kill even the Romish beast by the sword of justice, we must by that sword be killed. We may hate the heresy without hating the heretic, and idolatry, without hating the poor blind idolater; love is all-subduing.

Here ends the history of the Pagan and Romish beast of the first two periods of 666 years of this Christian dispensation, down to the year 1332 of it; or, remembering this chapter is a codicil, and not the regular history, or the regular periods as defined under the seals and trumpets, the 175 years of the third period mentioned in Rev. xi. 9, 11 may be added, bringing the year down to the period 1507,—to precisely the time of the calling of Erasmus and Luther; I say precisely, for Erasmus was called of God to begin again the work of the Reformation precisely at this period. I only say again, because the Reformation was begun by Wickliff at the end of the second period; so that those 175 years lie between him and the two next great Reformers, Erasmus and Luther.

From the 11th verse of this 13th chapter there is a distinct revelation of a second beast, the history of whom is one of the most important in this book. I have always thought it to be the history of the Mohammedan power under the fifth trumpet

(Rev. xiii. 9—12), a codicil to that trumpet ; but upon more mature reflection I am convinced it is a distinct vision,—a continuation of the history of the Romish beast in another power, an offshoot from the parent stock—France. Let us look at it as such. I was deceived, from believing it to be a codicil to the regular history under the trumpets ; but I have said before, Rev. xi. is a codicil to the seals and trumpets.

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth ; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” I think we shall see again the Romish corruption ; and find that France and Spain, or France and Prussia, answer better to the description than the Mohammedan power.

Ancient Gaul was barbarian, savage, and Pagan ; and the description of this beast as coming up out of the earth may signify the Romish corruptions in that state of earthliness, “Of the earth, earthy.” (1 Cor. xv. 47—49.) Throughout this book of the Revelation, earth does represent those who are earthly ; and heaven, those who are heavenly. Charlemagne was crowned by the Pope at Rome in the seventh century, and from that time the country has been more or less Romish.

The two horns may represent France and Spain ; and the notice, “like a lamb,” may refer to the Christian name, as a lamb was the symbol of Christianity ; but let us not be deceived : “like a lamb.” Both those countries were alike submerged in the dense darkness of Romanism. We know the history of the Invincible Armada,—how Spain was defeated when it would have crushed England by its rampant paw. It is further said of this beast, “He spake as a dragon.” Has not the voice of regal and imperial France ever been that of a dragon ? The same as of the old dynasty of the Pharaohs. Louis XIV., a

monster of selfishness, pride, ambition, and sin, was called "The Great," "The most Christian King," "a god." And was not the voice of Napoleon that of a dragon? of the old great leading powers of the world? of the despotic Pharaohs? of the Nebuchadnezzars? Was he not an imitator of Alexander the Great? The renunciation of Protestantism by Henry the Fourth was one of the most remarkable and calamitous events of history. It was an overwhelming temptation of Satan that he had not power to resist. Intoxicated with unlawful power, and deceived by the devil, he was lost in the engulging vortex.

"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast *before him*, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." If my reader would read the life of Louis XIV. only, he would see how precisely it answers the description of this second beast. He did exercise all the power of Rome, before Rome: and caused those who were of the earth, whose names were not written in the Lamb's book of life, to worship Rome, and to conform to Rome. But this mention of "the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed," may refer to the old spiritual, regal, and Pagan power that then dwelt in himself; as I have shown the people did worship him as a God; and he did all this before Rome.

"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast: saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword and did live." The fire of persecution, affliction, and of martyrdom, did come

down from that firmament of power in the sight of men ; so that they were deceived, and thought the might and the power to be of God. The words are most striking, for they did esteem the great power as miraculous. The Church of Rome was the image of the reigning Pontiff,—of the beast ; that is, of the same nature : the figure is taken from the nature of Christ which Christians receive when they openly profess His name. (Rev. iii. 12 ; xiii. 16, 17.) The regal power of France did force the people to have a Church consonant with its own power, and in the image of the parent beast, “ Which had a wound by a sword, and did live.” This may refer to the Reformation ; and, further back still, to the Imperial head that was wounded to death (xiii. 3) ; for I have shown the spiritual Imperial enemy only ceded his authority and seat to Rome Papal.

“ And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” France did thus give life to the Church of Rome ; as it were resuscitate her, or restore her when she was apparently expiring. And did cause that Church to speak to force conformity and subjection ; and to give the order of death to those who would not conform and worship the temporal power. In the St. Bartholomew massacre of the Huguenots alone, from 70,000 to 100,000 persons are said to have been “ killed.” “ Gregory XIII. and his cardinals went in procession from sanctuary to sanctuary to give God thanks for the massacre. The subject was ordered to be painted, and a medal was struck with the Pope’s image on one side, and the destroying angel on the other immolating the Huguenots.” But this is only a very

small portion of the millions who were slaughtered, not only in France, but in many other places, for more than 200 years after Rome had the wound by the sword of the Spirit—the Word of God.

“And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads : and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” In the reign of Louis XIV., we read of these very acts of conformity, of edicts, and interdictions. “His ministers wrote to the governors throughout the provinces, that his Majesty will not suffer any person in his kingdom but those who are of *his* religion ; and orders were shortly after issued that Protestantism must cease to exist, and that the Huguenots must everywhere conform to the *royal* will. In some provinces the exclusion was so severe that a profession of the Roman Catholic faith was required from simple artizans, shoemakers, carpenters, and the like, before they were permitted to labour at their callings.” When a poor wretch was under these interdicts, or the ban of the Church, no tradesman might sell him food or clothes. In consequence of this, thousands fled into England, and many other countries, which, by the Providence of God, became the cause of England's commercial greatness.

To raise her revenues, the corrupt Church of Rome not only sold indulgences throughout many countries, but posted bills to this effect : “This day souls are taken out of purgatory.” And to the present time, in Spain, indulgences can be bought in any shop for a shilling each. How black, how foul, how hellish must be the system that can raise money by such means ! But the important, solemn question that arises here is, and it is

one that should rouse us all to earnestness and zeal, What may still be the future of these powers? We know the conflicts that remain, according to this theory of seven periods of 666 years. The sixth vial, the drying up of the Euphrates. (Rev. xvi. 12; xiii. 14.) The conflict under the seventh trumpet (Rev. xi. 15), and "The battle of that great day of God *Almighty*," under the seventh vial. (Rev. xvi. 17.) Rejoice Christian at that word, "*Almighty*!" for it is this second beast, this offshoot of the old stock, with a like unclean spirit out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, who are to take their parts in the winding up of this economy. The last verse of this chapter is encouraging, although prophetic, and problematical. But before explaining it, I would say, the second, third, and fourth chapters of Daniel should be read here to enlighten my reader on the subject of this conflict; it is rooted in those chapters; showing us how the spiritual enemy is the same in all ages: as proud, ambitious, cruel, aggrandising, and murderous in the modern dynasties as in the ancient ones. Just as the Chaldeans, astrologers, diviners, and wise men of Babylon were the abettors of Nebuchadnezzar against the worshippers of the true God, and joined in deadly conspiracy to compass their deaths; so here this second beast is the abettor of Rome, and enforcing the same creature worship. To teach the people that there is salvation in the Church, and no where else, is to teach them to worship the Church. To teach them that the Pope, or the priests can forgive sins, and no one else, is to teach them to worship the Church. To teach them that the Pope, or the priests only can feed them with the bread of life, is to teach them to worship the Church. And again, to teach them that

the Pope has the power to curse, and to damn eternally, is to teach them to worship him,—just as Pagans worship devils to pacify them towards themselves. Then the Romish Antichrist is the old beast, although in another form.

The mark of the beast in the 16th and 17th verses, signifies the sign of the visible Church,—of the cross it may be ; for much that we still retain is really Romish. The cross is a beautiful symbol ; but if it comes between the worshipper and God, it is an idolatrous object of worship. “The mark or *name* of the beast,”—that is, the name of the Church of Rome, in opposition to the name of the Church of Christ,—that which He so emphatically called, “My Church,” which He commanded us to receive, and which we do receive in the name of Christian : “The name of the city of my God, New Jerusalem, which cometh out of heaven from my God.” (Rev. iii. 12.) Is not this ever the cry of Rome,—that the Roman Church built upon St. Peter is the only true Apostolic Church, and unless the people believe this they cannot obtain pardon or be saved ? “Or the *number* of his name.” This is written in distinction from the name of the Holy *Trinity* which we receive at baptism. “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matt. xx. 19.) But the origin of the symbolical number may have been Rome, the holy city of his highness the Pope, built upon *seven* hills, in distinction from the city of God. “I will write upon him the name of the city of my God.” (Rev. iii. 12.) But I have said, the symbolical number, for the number reveals the *nature* of the beast in his *sevenfold* character,—as when we are baptized in the name of the Trinity, it signifies the Divine *nature* (Jer. xxxi. 33 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 26) ; or, as Christian,

signifies the nature of Christ. "And I will write upon him my new name." (Rev. iii. 12.) So of this number of the name of the beast. "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself *seven* other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there : and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." (Matt. xii. 45.) I can never think of this verse but with perfect awe. How careful should we be to cut off, to pluck out, and to cast forth whatever offends ; and to supplicate the Spirit of God to fill the void, lest the evil thus increase *sevenfold*, overcome us and hurl us to perdition.

The meaning here is, that the Church having usurped the prerogative to forgive, and to anathematize, no man could obtain pardon, peace, and salvation without these credentials. If this description had been written now, instead of ages and centuries before the rise of the beast, could the edicts, interdictions, and events have been more wonderfully recorded !

"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast : for it is the number of a man ; and his number six hundred threescore and six." This notification, "Here is wisdom," refers to Dan. ii. 14, 20, 23, 28, 30. The prophet simply said there was such a thing as spiritual knowledge, Divine teaching,—that God, and none but God could "reveal secrets. . . . Wisdom and might are His." And so here in the Revelation, a problem is proposed by God Himself, one that He only could explain when He would and by whom He would.

"Let him that hath understanding," or this Divine wisdom, "count the number of the beast,"—that is both of Nebuchadnezzar, and of this beast of the Revelation, for spiritually they

are one. "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let *seven times* pass over him." (Dan. iv. 16, 23, 32.) And so in the antitype: "For it is the number of a man,"—of Nebuchadnezzar, and of "the man of sin," "the old man." "And his number two hundred threescore and six." That is seven times 666 years.

The translator in this verse has added, "And his number is six hundred threescore and six;" which is wrong. The *is* is not in the original; and it very much alters the meaning, for by the *is* the number 666 is made to be the foregoing number, whereas the two numbers make the whole. "Let him that hath understanding, count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number six hundred threescore and six:" seven times 666 years. The number relates to "the third part" under the trumpets, and to the 666 years remaining of the beast's existence in the seventh period; for this chapter brings us down to the end of the sixth period, as is evidenced from the next, the fourteenth chapter, opening with the same vision as is seen quite at the end of the history under the *sixth* seal, seventh chapter. Thus is the mystical seven of this book of the whole of Revelation explained, and also "the third part" under the trumpets. We might well suppose so remarkable a notification would be definitely explained; "the third part" of a dispensation of 2,000 years, save the fractional two.

But I cannot help thinking there is a deeper problem still in this number of the beast; not an absolute decree, but another possible interpretation! The seven times may be explained, seven rounds of time, seven periods of 2,000 years. And the distinct number 666 years may still mean "the third part" of one of those periods, and the remaining period of the beast's

existence in the seventh dispensation ; for this chapter only brings us down to the end of the sixth period, considering either theory.

I will here only say further, if the goal be missed it will not be God's fault. He has decreed the Church's salvation now ; and He has given her a free will,—not to work out her own salvation, that stands in Christ alone, but—to work out her own salvation by acquiring a deep knowledge of His Word ; and then by walking in the light of that knowledge, in His commandments, and in the diligent use of all His appointed ordinances. I do believe the victory will be the Church's now.

CHAPTER XIV.

THIS chapter is an outline of history from the end of the sixth period of 666 years to the end of time.

1 *And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

2 *And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder : and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps :*

3 *And they sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four cherubim, and the elders : and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*

4 *These are they which were not defiled with women ; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

5 *And in their mouth was found no guile : for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

These first five verses of this chapter are a codicil to the history of the Jewish Church under the sixth seal : that his-

tory should be read to understand it. (Rev. vi. from ver. 12; vii.) But we shall compare them as we proceed. I have said the last chapter brought us down to the end of the sixth period. The scene of the second beast abetting, strengthening, and giving life to Rome enacted, and the problematical prophecy having gone forth, John said: "I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads." A new scene fell upon his vision, and well might he thus exclaim. The Lamb of God has returned to His ancient people, and they are Christians: for the Lamb is the symbol of Christianity, and the Father's name is the orthodox name (Rev. iii. 12): noted here in contradistinction to the mark and name of Rome, all had before been forced to receive. The words of Daniel referred to Christ's first coming; but they were also a prophecy of this His second advent. "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of Thy people." (Dan. xii.) "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives." (Zech. xiv.) But the presence here spoken of is a spiritual one, and not His coming to judgment and to reign in the millennial period, which are afterwards revealed.

Whether these first-fruits of the Jewish Church are a representative number of the converted Jews of the moment in which we live, I do not know: I am inclined to think not; but that such a sudden return of Christ's spiritual presence to His ancient people will take place as is here described. It may be as startling to the world as it was to John, and those who live to see it may exclaim with the same astonishment, "Lo, the Lamb on the Mount Sion!" so evident may be His work. But

God the Creator and God the Redeemer is God the Holy Ghost : His office is to reveal Christ, that we may receive Him. (John xvi. 13, 14.) And hence this vision of the presence of the Lamb, and of the Father's name written by the Spirit : the work is one,—God's.

I repeat, I cannot say if this is a representative number of the converted Jews of this period, or whether there will be such a sudden return of the life of God to them : the wording of the record renders both possible. "After these things." (Rev. vii. 1, 2, 3.) After the triumph of the Protestant Church over the beast, as related under the sixth seal (Rev. vi. 12—17), that occurred now some time since, and this work of sealing may have been going on ; but then, here is a work for that Church to do, the events of the history must be carried on. These Christians, for they are now Christians, are seen to stand "on the Mount Sion," in their ancient inheritance : as I have said, all converted Jews, humble, thankful, holy Christians, should be restored to Palestine.

The voice heard is the Paschal anthem after that restoration, —the celebration of the Christian Passover after their great deliverance and introduction into the Christian Church. "And I heard a voice from heaven"—from the community of God's people in the temple upon the Mount Sion—"as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder,"—of a prophecy of more victory, and of more judgments upon the enemies. "And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sang *as it were a new song* before the throne, and before the four cherubim, and the elders : and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were *redeemed from the earth.*" This is the

Christian hymn (Matt. xxvi. 30) rooted in the ancient festival. No man will be able to learn it but the dispersed Jews brought back to the fold of God ; brought back from long dispersion, from settlements upon many waters, to their own inheritance. How new would seem the song : "as it were new." But it was always the same : the blood of the Paschal Lamb cleansed from sin, and the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. My reader should turn to some passages to understand all the meaning of this thrilling, soul-inspiring anthem of the first-fruits of the Jews in the Christian temple. (Levit. xxiii. 9, 11, 12 ; xv. from ver. 23 ; Isa. i. 27 ; lii. 3 ; lxiii. 4 ; Luke i. 68 ; 1 Tim. ii. 6 ; Tit. ii. 14 ; Ps. li. 2, 7, 9, 18.) They have now taken down their harps from the willows and tuned them to their Redeemer's praise. As this throng is seen under the *sixth* seal (Rev. vii.), we may suppose the return will take place before the actual pouring out of the *sixth* vial ; and this explains the voice as of *a great thunder*, in the anthem.

"These are they which were not defiled with women ; for they are virgins." That is, this throng has not defiled themselves with the corruptions of the corrupt Churches of the fourth and fifth periods ; they had preserved a pure faith amidst much temptation to renounce it. The page of history under the *sixth* Church should be read here to understand this voice to those who had preserved themselves pure. (Rev. iii. 7—12). "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth : " that is, who maintain the name of Christ, the Christian faith, into whatever scenes of conflict He may lead them. The words are a reference to Rev. vii. 17, and to show that the sealed throng is the same. If we follow the Lamb, He will ever lead us on into broader and deeper truths, into

clearer knowledge of Himself; or, as it is there expressed, "Lead them unto living fountains of waters."

"These were *redeemed* from among men, the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." That is, bought back again to their temporal and eternal inheritance by Christ, their elder brother and nearest kinsman. (Levit. xxiii. 9—15.) As we now see the Jews in their dispersion, scattered over every land, how well do we understand this prophecy of their future state: it will as surely be fulfilled as that they returned from Egypt, from Babylon, and from wherever they have been driven.

"And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God." That is, they will be true, genuine Christians; not hypocrites and pretenders, as the Jews in the times that are past. (Rev. ii. 9; iii. 9.) Christ said of Nathanael, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" And we do rejoice that He can appreciate guileless persons.

Here, at this fifth verse, in this fourteenth chapter, finishes the codicil to the history of the resurrection of the first-fruits of the Jewish Church, as is seen in the seventh chapter to the eighth verse. And I think if the Christian Church is faithful and loving to that people, we may soon expect to see this advent of Christ in these first-fruits. "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?"

6 *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people,*

7 *Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

This angel is the Christian Church : her commission, "The everlasting gospel" in her hands, identifies her. We have not read of any angel, and yet this section of the chapter opens with the notification, "I saw another angel." I have shown the Jewish Church was the last body spoken of, now the Gentile Church is heard and seen. It is the angel under the sixth seal. (Rev. vi. from ver. 12.) We must remember the thirteenth chapter was a codicil to the history of the Romish beast : and thus it is this chapter is a codicil to the history of the Church of Christ. This angel represents this sixth period of 666 years : the phalanx of men in the time of the glorious Reformation ; and the Church down to the end of this period. And, therefore, I would speak most cautiously as to whether "the hundred forty and four thousand" sealed ones, in the seventh chapter, and here, in the fourteenth, may not be a representative number of the converted Jews of this period. Be this as it may, God's acknowledgment of them is most encouraging to go forward with the work of the conversion of the Jews : the time may be at the very door when a nation shall be born in a day.

My dear reader, pause to consider what is included in that grand expression, "The everlasting gospel,"—the glad tidings of salvation from eternity to eternity : Christ all, and in all to His people, to the whole world. Salvation and eternal life are in Him, and in Him alone ; and His angel, the Church, never will find perfect joy, peace, and victory in believing for herself, till she is zealous to make others partakers of her joy ; till she learns to say with St. Paul, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Eph.

iii. 8.) "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 16.) We are now arrived at a truly awful moment in the world's history : its day of grace is closing, the antichristian powers are falling around, the empire of Satan is narrowing, the *cue* of the fall of Babylon the Great is come, and the only weapon of the conquering warrior is "the everlasting gospel;" or, as we have read before in other grand victories, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." (Rev. xii. 11.) The truth of Christ is a fact, a stupendous fact. Oh, I repeat, it is a fact, a glorious fact! it will support the soul in death when nothing else can save; it will support the world in its dissolution when every other prop falls in the general ruin! Conscience may condemn, Satan may accuse, hell may rage, but the blood of Christ is all my plea : it was shed for me, and I am saved!

Then, Church of Christ, what is your position relatively to this Romish beast? You are not to hold her up to ridicule and scorn, you are not to avoid, or to be indifferent to her; you are not to think she is only a being to execrate, and to decry. No: oh no! You are sent to preach the "Everlasting gospel" to that great city, just as Jonah was sent to Nineveh. You have yourself been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son; and your commission is just that of this angel's,—to snatch some souls from that burning pit, and to bring them to Christ; to overcome the incarnate man of sin in that Church by the blood of the Lamb, and by your stanch adherence to the truth. Vituperation will not do it, but love. The Christlike Christian will best commend his love.

Mark the sequel of this angel's sermon: "Saying with a loud

voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." We do well to walk each day in the fear of God, scrupulously according to His word : "The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." But here is another command we shall do well to observe : "And give glory to Him." How can we best glorify God ? By humility, moderation, soberness, vigilance, and steadfastness of purpose : these at all times glorify God, but in moments of a great crisis and of convulsions, we may glorify Him more particularly by watchfulness ; in those moments when we are too often thrown off our guard, and Satan, who is always vigilant, watches his opportunity, and we dishonour God.

"For the hour of His judgment is come." We have seen an omen, and a prophecy at the end of every history, and this proclamation is a prophecy of the final fall of the Romish Church. The Church of Christ is a prophet as well as a preacher of the gospel. I have shown the prophetic element throughout this book : "I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy." (Rev. xi. 3.) Prophecy is a part of the Church's true commission.

"And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." This command has a literal meaning. We are at all times to worship the great Creator ; but in creation there is a strict analogy to the kingdom of grace : our Creator was our Redeemer, and therefore we are not only to worship the Creator, but our Redeemer, God, who planted heaven upon earth, who opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers, and who would that the whole earth should be brought into that kingdom. Yes, let us *worship* God in Christ for our great salvation. This command is in opposition to that

rank idolatry and worship of the beast, which so lately had been universal.

8 *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

This angel is the angel with the sixth trumpet. (Rev. ix. from ver. 13.) He represents the same period as the last angel, this sixth period; but I have before shown the field of action under the *sixth* seal is of the Protestant Church against Rome; and under the *sixth* trumpet, of the subjugation of the Romish beast by the Turks, or Mohammedan beast: thus both spheres of action are revealed. But this cry is of the angel, the Church,—that Babylon is again fallen, fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of her fornication. This is rooted in Isa. xxi. 9; Jer. li. 8; where the same thing is written of ancient Babylon: thus not only was Nebuchadnezzar a type of the Romish beast, but the ancient city was a type of this mystical Babylon. And as certainly as the one was utterly destroyed, so will be the other. This wine of her fornication means the evil leaven of her idolatry and false teaching,—that which we have seen forced upon all, or in case of insubjection incurring the penalty of excommunication and eternal damnation, according to the sentence of the beast. (Rev. xiii. 17.) But the wine of the *wrath* of her fornication is a still stronger expression: she enforces idolatry, not from principle, not from conviction, not from delusion,—but from wrath, rage, fury, vengeance, from all the most deadly passions of her nature, which we have seen to be of “hell.”

9 *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice,*

If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10 *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:*

11 *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

12 *Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*

This particular notification, "The third angel followed them," notifies the third angel of this sixth period; the angel with the vial, in distinction from the angel with the seal and the trumpet: proving that although it is written of the first of these *three* angels, "another angel" (Rev. xiv. 6), in distinction from the Jewish Church of the first five verses, still not distinct in period, for it is under the *sixth* seal that the firstfruits of the Jewish Church are sealed with the Spirit of God. (Rev. vii.) These three angels (Rev. vii. 6, 8, 9) do represent this sixth period; and the angel, or the history of the Jewish Church of the first five verses is included in it. The page of history to the twelfth verse is of the sixth period.

This *third* angel is the angel with the *sixth* vial, now so soon to be poured upon the mystical Euphrates; and his voice here is prophetic, one of warning, a proclamation of the vial, and of the final impending judgments.

"The *third* angel followed them,"—that is, followed the angels, or the Church under the seal and trumpet,—"*Saying with*

a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." I have again extracted this, because I say it is a voice of warning, of alarm, a forewarning voice of the sixth vial ; the nature of which vial may be better understood from the codicil to it (Rev. xviii.), than from the vial itself. Much more than what is called Rome, and Mohammedanism will fall under that vial, as is plainly seen. The voice of the last angel was, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen : " it referred to the parent stock,—to Rome. But there is still an enemy on the field, danger lowering ; the spiritual enemy is not dead ; the second beast of the thirteenth chapter, with two horns, which I have said is France and Spain, and it may be the enemy in our bosom, is still on the field ; and this voice of the next 130 years is against them. They may yet increase in presumption, and in bigotry ; and hence this authoritative voice of the Church of Christ. She is in power, spiritually enlightened, and she uses her power and knowledge faithfully to warn, to alarm, to make edicts, and to revoke such Romish ones as shall save her people. As in the codicil to the vial, she calls to God's people to come out from all union and communion with heresy, that they may not be overwhelmed in these last great awful judgments.

But should not the Christian Church first cleanse herself from all filthiness of the flesh, and of the spirit, before she sends forth such a manifesto as this? Certainly she should; for if the Babylonish garment be found in her tent, may she not be the first to be destroyed? (Joa. vii.) This voice seems to be rather of the true, faithful, hidden Church of Christ than of the body,—the visible Church; and so we are sure much of the Babylon of ourselves will fall in these approaching judgments, to cleanse and purify, to prepare the Church for her millennial rest. But I may leave this subject here, it is so wonderfully laid before us in the eighteenth chapter. But as a forewarning voice, we do well to listen to it in these verses, before the evil overtakes us: in how many ways may we worship the beast, his image, and have his mark in our foreheads! Have we not all these? And yet this is the right position for the Church to take,—to warn her people of the subtlety of Rome, to warn them of peril, and of these fast approaching judgments. This angel's voice relates to the moment in which we live; and I would add, it is only by faithfulness, and holy action, by boldly maintaining the truth of Christ for herself, and commending it to others in love, and by a pure life, that she can save herself from loss and defeat in these coming conflicts. She must be firm to resist Romish innovations; she must rehearse faithfully, but tenderly, these words of God by this angel: they are given to her by Him, and to her purpose. They should be made a part of a public document; for, as I have before said, it is as easy to glide into Rome now, as it was in the seventh century. I do particularly commend the commission of this third angel to the notice of the Christian Church, for it is her own. May she have grace to go forth with

it, in humility, in all the winning graces of the Spirit, in genuine love to souls.

I do not know what the nature of the sixth vial will be, but this angel's voice proclaims that it will be a terrible one; and from the eighteenth chapter, which is a codicil to it, and which is rooted in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven, we may suppose it will be an awful calamity of a like supernatural nature: an earthquake, eruption, or some other supernatural event. Something to secure victory to the people aiding in the cause of the Jews.

Perhaps it will be a Divine voice, so awful that the Christian Church will once, and for ever, put off the garment of the flesh and the world; at once, and in right earnest, overcome the devil, and let into her heart the Spirit of Christ and of God. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock," extends to her seventh day career.

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. "Oh, for this attainment in the Divine life! Oh, for this evidence of the genuineness of our profession, patience, and faith! Grace to keep the commandments of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Without some special gifts of God, we cannot do it. Oh, come Lord Jesus! come quickly, and put an end to this strife of tongues."

13 *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*

As the ninth, tenth, and eleventh verses were a prophecy of eternal punishment to those who should still bear the mark of

the beast,—that is, his nature,—so here this verse is still a prophecy; but of the resurrection of the just, and of their reward. We must not forget that all is now drawing to a close. “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me,”—from the Holy of holies of the Christian temple (Rev. iv. 1—3),—“Write, *Blessed* are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth:” that is, anointed with life for the resurrection. (Mark xiv. 8, 9.) The time is close at hand. “*Blessed and holy* is he that hath part in the first resurrection.” (Rev. xx. 6.) “Yea, saith the Spirit.” This form of expression is the same as that so constantly used by Christ: “Verily, verily,” or Truly, truly. What had been said by God the Father from the throne, is confirmed by the Holy Ghost, who is at the very door to raise the dead, to move upon the dust of the earth that it may awake, just as He did upon the face of the waters to give life. “Behold, I make all things new.” (Rev. xxi. 5.) And in the end our world is seen to bloom again in eternal spring. “That they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.” Yes: the Christian life is a labour, the Christian warfare is travail. Our natural life is labour; but there remaineth a rest for the people of God; and their works, poor and unworthy though they be, will follow them. “The dead were judged according to their works.” (Rev. xx. 12.) Thus we see how a prophecy is placed at the end of each history in this book.

14 *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.*

“And I looked” (we have seen before this exclamation never occurs in this book but when some new and striking

phenomenon appears) "and behold a white cloud." A cloud was the known emblem of multitudes, or hosts of people. (Isa. lx. 8; Jer. iv. 13; Heb. xii. 1.) "Behold, He cometh with clouds" (Rev. i. 7); with clouds of enemies in judgment: but this "*white* cloud" signifies hosts of angels. "And upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man." When this expression occurs, "*Like* unto the Son of man," as again in Dan. iii. 25, I think the spiritual presence of Christ is signified; Christ in His Church, as seen in Rev. xix. from ver. 11. The verse is rooted in His own words: "There shall appear the *sign* of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming *in* the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. xxiv. 27, 30, 31.) It will be seen in a moment this is not the coming of the Son of God to judgment after the resurrection. That coming is revealed in the next chapter (Matt. xxv. 31 to the end), and in Rev. xx. from ver. 11. Throughout this book we have seen His angels flying through the midst of heaven, full of ardour and holy zeal; and this seems to be the culminating point of the Church's grand commission: she is now restored to the likeness of "the Son of man," the Representative of the human family, and doing His great work even as Himself; or rather, it is Himself who is doing the work. "Having on His head a golden crown." This crown is that which was promised to her: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. ii. 10.) And the last voice to the sixth Church is, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy

crown." (Rev. iii. 11.) Then this verse like the last is a prophecy ; but it is one of the page of history under the voices of the next three angels, who represent the page of history under the *seventh* seal, the *seventh* trumpet, and the *seventh* vial, in all of which Christ is seen to be the conqueror in the Church. "The *seventh* angel sounded ; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." (Rev. xi. 15.) And the codicil to this *seventh* trumpet (Rev. xix. 11—16), is more lucid in victory still : "Behold a white horse ; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True. . . . And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, *KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*" So that this prophetic verse (Rev. xiv. 14) is easy to understand. "Upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a *golden crown*, and in His hand a *sharp sickle* : " victory and judgment are alike foreshown.

15 *And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap : for the time is come for thee to reap : for the harvest of the earth is ripe.*

16 *And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth ; and the earth was reaped.*

This angel is the universal Church, under the *seventh* seal, although in the regular history there is no mention of her. "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour" (Rev. viii. 1) ; that is, the song of deliverance and of victory of the Jewish Church over the mystical Euphrates, under the sixth vial, ceased for a moment while these last conflicts were fought. "Crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud." To

whom do we cry for help but to the Son of God? He is now known to be the victor, and the cry is one of urgency and of confidence. "Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap." The angel knows from Scripture that the time of the end of the world is come, and he supplicates Christ to gather in His elect, and to close the scene: "For the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." What physical events will thus close our economy I do not know; but here we see the elect of God gathered into His garner, safe in the haven of their rest before the wicked are overwhelmed in the last great judgments which follow.

17 *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*

This angel is the angel with the *seventh* trumpet, under which we read, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. xi. 15.) Note in these verses when the elect are gathered in the angel says to the Son of God, "Thy sickle;" but when the minister of justice is to act, the expression is, "Having a *sharp* sickle." The messenger of death is the king of terrors to the wicked, but of peace to the disciples of Christ. And thus this angel with the *seventh* trumpet is said to have a sharp sickle, because the enemies of God only fall under it.

18 *And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.*

19 *And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and*

gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

This angel is the angel with the *seventh vial* ; he is a minister of justice, and thus is said to come out from the altar of burnt offering, the fire upon which symbolized eternal justice. Justice and judgment are now to go forth upon those who had so long despised the longsuffering and grace of God. The angel cries with a loud cry to Him who had the sharp sickle,—that is to the Son of God, seen in the fourteenth verse. The crown is His, and the sharp sickle is now to be the last weapon of warfare. The Church of Christ has been submerged in seas of blood, and this is the only justification for this cry for the fire of justice, together with the ardent wish for the glory of the cause of Christ. But to the last, let us cry for mercy, even upon impenitent rebels ; and when all hope is over, let Christ be the minister of justice. “ He that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth ; and the earth was reaped. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.” What will be the nature of this last vial it is impossible for me to say, for while we see three unclean spirits come forth from the dying bodies of the dragon, beast, and false prophet, and go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the last great battle in the place Armageddon, so that we may suppose a great bloody conflict will be fought : “ Unto the end of the war desolations are determined ;” still, we may suppose also that some

great signal destruction from the presence of the Lord will overwhelm and engulf the enemy. "The seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." (Rev. xvi. from ver. 17.) All these vials are rooted in the plagues of Egypt, and we may suppose some signal vengeance, far more tremendous, will overtake the antichrists of the end of the world after they have so long impiously defied Christ and braved and provoked judgment. But we see from the whole tenor of history that God has but one purpose in the world's conflict which He has instituted,—that of gathering souls from the kingdom of darkness to Christ. "The mystery of iniquity may be deep, but "the mystery of God" is deeper, broader, higher still. Life through Christ is the key to my own heart, and it is the key of hell.

This figurative language, "the vine of the earth," is rooted in Deut. xxxii. 31—35: "Their rock is not as our Rock. . . . For their vine is as the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah." The reference is to the Pagan Church of the world's history; not being built upon Christ, the only sure foundation, it is now rooted up, "and cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God;" or, as it is said in the codicil to this last vial, "the *beast* was taken, and with him the false prophets. . . . These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." (Rev. xix. 20.)

"And the winepress was trodden without the city;" this means, without the holy city, the principal seat of the universal Christian Church, wherever that may then be. If my reader will turn to the field of action, I think he will see this. The sixth vial is the drying up of the Euphrates; after which three

unclean spirits out of the mouth of the beast, the dragon, and the false prophet, are seen to go forth, and to collect all the forces they can rally for this last great battle of God Almighty. "And *he* gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." (Rev. xvi. 14—16.) That is, God gathered them together, and then His last vial is poured out, and He is the victor. The word Armageddon means, "the kingdom of the Gospel," and so it is probable that the poor wretched remnant of the army of Satan will make one desperate effort for the last time, lie intrenched around that kingdom ready for an assault, when some signal vengeance will overtake it, and it will be destroyed finally and for ever. Or, it is likely this last army will lie intrenched about Jerusalem, to try to retake the territory lost under the sixth vial, and that then the action under the seventh trumpet will take place (Rev. xi. 16); and then the seventh vial will be poured forth.

"And blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." This distance is of time. A furlong is the eighth part of a mile. The word is from the Greek word *stadium*, and means a course for running or racing, to which St. Paul refers. (1 Cor. ix. 24.) Here periods of judgments are signified,—in the period represented by the angel with the vial, or it may be those successive judgments which are seen to follow so rapidly each other from the time of the first great downfall of the beast. (1 Cor. xvi. 11; vi. from verse 12; ix. from verse 13; xvi. 12—14; xi. from verse 15; xvi. from verse 17.) These periods of loss, defeat, and destruction may make this period here referred to 1600 years; for in the whole of these codicils to the trumpets we must compute time as under them: days,

or rounds of time, meaning years ; from the feast of trumpets being an annual festival. Under the sixth trumpet we have seen the conflict last for an hour, a day, a month, and a year (Rev. ix. 15), giving space to "repent." Thus marvellous are God's forbearance and longsuffering, even to those the farthest off from Him. But at last they are stricken by the arrows of judgment and death. God has no other purpose in judgment than to awaken men from their dream of sin, religious delusions,—to induce them to repent, and to flee to Christ. But I leave this chapter, so sublime in the descriptions of the operation of the Church, placing one grand fact of it before my readers,—that Christ is the angel of mercy by the pillow of the dying righteous man, to bear his soul to glory ; and that His minister of eternal justice, the evil spirit, is by the pillow of wicked men, to bear them to the "lake of fire burning with brimstone."

The history in Rev. xiv. is from the sixth seal to the time of the seventh vial. The angels are the connecting links of the history. Only that from the thirteenth verse is prophecy of the *seventh* period of 666 years, added to the codicil to the *sixth* period of 666 years : that thirteenth verse only being distinct, an interlying prophecy of the resurrection.

with the seven trumpets were a sign ; the Lamb upon Mount Sion (Rev. xiv. 1) was a sign ; and the beast rising up out of the sea. (Rev. xiii. 1.) These were all in their time new signs, but the word is not used till this fifteenth chapter, because it seems to have been an understood thing in the mind of the Spirit that the reader would have recognized in the Son of man of Rev. xiv. 14, "the sign of the Son of man in heaven," spoken of by St. Matthew, and thereby have been prepared to see again a new sign.

And this sign, seven angels having the seven last plagues, is said to be great and marvellous, because the calamities are more tremendous, more final, for they close the seven periods of 666 years : "For in them is filled up the wrath of God." Thus, before the first vial there was the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire and brimstone from heaven ; also the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea ; but it was the destruction of the Canaanites that was the filling up of the wrath of God against the people without the pale of His mercy. And so I might go through each of the other five periods now almost completed, and show many like awful calamities, but the final one has been the filling up of the wrath of God. How should His many voices, and His long suffering urge us to flee for refuge to the hope set before us in the Gospel ! The word "plagues" here, is from the plagues of Egypt, and we shall find the seven very largely rooted in them. Vial has the same meaning : it was borrowed from the pan, or censer, with which the fire upon the altar was removed, or, as we have seen, cast upon the earth (Rev. viii. 5),—not here, as upon Christ : He alone could endure the fire of eternal justice.

Rev. viii. 2, 3, 4, are an interlude in this preface to the

vials : a song of thanksgiving and praise for victory over the beast. It relates to the history under the seals and trumpets ; the language is the same as in the codicil to the trumpets (Rev. xiii). It is intended here to be a guarantee of victory also over the conflicts under the vials. The sea of glass mingled with fire signifies the ocean of divine truth, mercy, and judgment ; and all who have gotten the victory over the beast, the world, the flesh, and the devil, in their multifarious forms, stand upon that crystal sea, with the harps of God, with hearts tuned to praise Him. The verses may refer to the faithful of the Jewish Church, who, when this was written, had gotten the victory over Pagan Rome. But the more immediate reference is to the Romish beast of Rev. xiii. The victory is over his image,—the Church system instituted to deify himself ; and his mark, the sign of the Romish faith ; and the number of his name, the sevenfold nature of his being, in distinction from the Triune nature of the Deity.

The song of Moses and of the Lamb may be found in Ex. xv. : "The Lord is a man of war. The Lord is His name. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods ; who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders ?" These songs of praise are one.

"And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened." That is, after the Paschal Anthem for deliverance had ceased, the Holy of Holies in the temple of God is opened, the chest in which the sacred ark is deposited, and the ark itself, which contained the sacred writings. In the Christian economy, the Holy Scriptures are that testimony. The commissions of the vials are given from them.

"And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles." These seven angels are messengers sent by God to announce these vials, to proclaim them as they approach from His Word. Their white linen is the imputed righteousness of Christ and the actual holiness of His Spirit. The golden girdles girding their breasts are the girdles of Divine truth: "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness."

"And one of the four cherubim"—one of the four representatives of the Word—"gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever." This one cherubim, who gives the vials to all the seven, may represent "the Spirit of prophecy;" for by the prophetic word alone can it be done. God has never sent great judgments in the world's history without foreshowing them to His people: in this book of the Revelation the periods are most definitely defined. These vials have the same meaning as cup, as I have shown, from the pan or censer of the altar of burnt offering. Thus the Romish woman of the fifth period is represented with "a golden cup in her hand." (Rev. xvii. 4.) "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand." (Jer. li. 7, 8.) "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Then took I the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the Lord had sent me: to wit, Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and the kings

thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse ; as it is this day." (Jer. xxv. 15—18.) This was the proclamation of the second vial, of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar ; and the carnage of that destruction should deeply solemnize our minds in the prospects of any one of these seven vials, for the day of the Lord's wrath is terrible against His enemies.

"And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power." This is rooted in Ex. xl. 34, 35 ; 2 Chron. v. 24. When the tabernacle and the temple were finished, the glory of the Lord filled them. But this smoke from His glory, or transcendent holiness, is the symbol of His eternal justice, as upon Sinai. When His grace is rejected, it burns afresh against the impenitent.

"And *no man* was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." This means no high priest, as Aaron, might enter into the Divine presence in the "holiest of all," to intercede, so as to have these vials of wrath averted. "*No man*"—that is, no human agent—should prevail with God to have the Divine edict annulled. Justice and judgment from the glory of God have so filled the temple that no man is able to enter there. If my reader will turn to a few passages he will see in a moment the full meaning of this Divine inhibition, or moral impossibility. (Gen. xviii. from verse 23 ; Job xli. 7—10 ; Num. xvi. 45—49.) Here Aaron made an atonement for the people,—“stood between the dead and the living ;” but not before fourteen thousand and seven hundred had died in the plague. But with regard to these vials, no human mediation may or can prevail. “Wrath is gone out from the Lord.” “No man

was able to enter into the temple." But Christ is a Mediator between even the world and God ; and, while out of hell, every sinner may flee to Him as a hiding place from the storm and tempest. Oh, that the mind's eye of those upon whom the sixth vial is to be poured could be directed to Him, as the eyes of the Israelites were to the serpent !

Here closes the preface to the seven vials.

CHAPTER XVI.

In this chapter are poured out the seven vials that close the seven periods of 666 years.

1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

We have seen these angels come out of the temple; that is, they are of the Church of Christ,—of “the generation of the righteous;” and we have seen the inspired penman give to them their commissions. (Rev. xv. 6, 7.) And now this voice from the Holy of Holies that so peremptorily commands them to go their way and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth, is the voice of the Holy Trinity: it issues from the inspired Word laid up in that heaven where God dwelt. That Word was inspired by the Eternal Three. (Isa. lvi. 11; 1 Pet. i. 11; 2 Pet. i. 21.) So that every voice from it is God’s voice. This command to these seven angels now is: Go, and proclaim My Word. And God, through Christ, being incarnate in that Word, the voice is His.

2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which

had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

This first vial was the destruction of the Canaanites in the land of Canaan. The charge of God to Joshua, in Joshua i., iii. 7, should be read here: it was just this, "Go your way, and pour out the vial of the wrath of God upon the earth." The whole book is one of the most inspiring and sublime of Revelation. "Upon the earth" means upon the people of the curse and of the world, in distinction from the people of the covenant and of God. Vials cannot really hurt them; if they affect them at all it is for their further sanctification and advancement in the Divine life. The noisome and grievous sore that fell upon the men who had the mark of the beast, and who worshipped his image, was conviction of sin. In ease and health the conscience is lulled; but in times of great judgments it is awakened and aroused. The meaning here is, that the curse in its unmitigated strength was felt again after the Flood, as before, by those without the covenant of grace. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." This "noisome and grievous sore" is that curse: "it remains upon those who have upon them the mark of Satan, and who worship him in the many images he has set up in this world. Not so with those who believe in Christ, and have the mark of His holy and loving nature. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." The Canaanites were under an enormous Pagan, regal power: they had the mark of that beast, and worshipped his image, even as did the devotees of Nebuchadnezzar, in whose history this language is rooted; as is also that of Rev. xiii. 15; xvi. 18; Dan.

iii. 4—16. When utter destruction came, they felt too late the noxious sore of sin.

3 *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea ; and it became as the blood of a dead man : and every living soul died in the sea.*

The second vial was the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the captivity of the holy people. "Poured upon the sea" means upon the people of God, from the molten sea of the temple (2 Chron. iv. 6), which did represent that holy See. (Rev. iv. 6.) The word *man* in this verse is in italics to show that it is not in the original, so that it may be read, "It became as the blood of a dead man ;" or, "As the blood of a dead sea ;" and I think both would be alike right. When the vial of "the wrath of God" was poured upon that people in the sight of the world they became as dead men, as a people dead in trespasses and sins. The world could not see the distinction : it knew nothing of that Divine purpose and discrimination so marvellously revealed in Jeremiah xxiv. The sea of glory, of God's brightness, became seas of blood, as the blood of dead men. If we read it "As the blood of a dead sea," it referred to the vial of God's wrath poured upon Sodom and Gomorrah, after which sudden destruction the waters of the Jordan rolled in upon the whole region where the cities of the plain had stood, and it became "A dead sea,"—dead, because nothing could live in it ; and its sulphureous qualities, the pitch and tar with which it was so strongly impregnated, may have given it the appearance of a sea of blood. But when we remember the population that must have perished in those five cities in the awful overthrow, we must admit the very fit expression, "A sea of blood." And

if my reader will read 2 Kings xxiv., xxv., and Jeremiah lii., he will see that the region and community of God's people became a sea of blood. And we see how our Saviour made those events of past history foreshow those that were to come. (Matt. x. 15 ; xi. 24 ; Mark vi. 11 ; Luke x. 12 ; xvii. 29.) This second vial closed the second period of 666 years of the Jewish dispensation, bringing the date down to the year 1332 of that dispensation.

4 *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters ; and they became blood.*

5 *And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus ;*

6 *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink ; for they are worthy.*

7 *And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

The third vial was the final destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews. At that time the typical economy had become so disfigured that it could not be read ; the Jewish religion so corrupted that, with regard to Divine intention, it almost ceased to exist ; the temple service in its sublime, original institution, had become a ruin ; the Divine presence had departed, and rivers and fountains of waters, long before our Saviour came, had superseded the molten sea of the temple, even as early as Naaman and the prophets. But when He came they were in common use as places for baptism (Matt. iii. 5, 6, 7 ; xiii. 16, 17 ; xxi. 24, 25—27 ; John iii. 22, 23 ; iv. 1 ; ix. 7—11) ; and hence the term, the sacred Jordan. Those rivers and fountains of waters are here made to represent

the holy people, as the molten sea had done before them. And thus this third vial is said to be poured into them. And we must remember it was not poured out till after the institution of the Christian constitution, when certainly the molten sea could no longer represent the Jews.

The angel of the waters here is Christ. Although He loved that people, and would have gathered them together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, still, throughout His ministry, His voice was just this,—Thou art righteous, O Lord, because Thou hast judged thus. He foretold the destruction of the holy city and the dispersion of the people just as they occurred; but we never once hear a single petition that those events might not take place. No: as in the life, so here,—the righteous judgment of the Almighty and Eternal Being was acknowledged.

“For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.” The Jews were allied with the Romans in the most deadly persecutions against their own people, so that it is impossible to say which was the most ferocious. But in all ages of the Church there is this murderous onslaught of the visible body against the true hidden Church; but in the end God demands blood for blood.

The other angel out of the altar, whose voice is one in judgment with that of Christ, is the Holy Ghost,—it may be “The Spirit of inspiration;” for we hear it throughout the New Testament: “The Lord God almighty true and righteous in all His judgments.” May we in like manner hear His voice, and bow to His righteous will.

This vial was not poured out at the end of the third period

of 666 years of the Jewish dispensation, at the end of the 1998th year, but 68 years later. Still the Jewish economy did pass away at the end of that period, and the Christian dispensation superseded it, so that the vial was rather of a period of time than of the destruction of Jerusalem only.

8 *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun ; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.*

9 *And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues : and they repented not to give him glory.*

This fourth vial was poured upon Imperial Rome : the sun always meaning an imperial or regal power. "And power was given unto *him* to scorch men with *fire*" is a revelation of the transmigration of the spiritual enemy into Papal Rome. In that new form he did scorch, consume, or torment men with the fire of false doctrine. A strong confirmation is here made : "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues : and they repented not to give Him glory." That is, heresy and false doctrine could only hurt those who had not, and who would not, embrace the truth of Christ and be obedient to His will ; as is seen under the fifth trumpet : "Hurt only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." (Rev. ix. 4.) But this sun, having power to scorch men with fire, may refer more directly to the regal power that existed in the Romish States, and that was exercised with such Satanic maliciousness to enforce men to conform to Rome and to worship the image of that beast, as seen in Rev. xiii. 15—17. The revocations of Edicts of Liberty of Worship and of Conscience, and the Acts of Conformity issued by many Sovereigns

of Europe, explain to us these verses. Roman Catholic Kings had power to enforce the most deadly heresy by law. But the purpose of God in all these out-breaks of violence and error is to bring men to Himself in humility, love, and gratitude for His great salvation.

This fourth vial brings the date down to the end of the first 666 years of this Christian dispensation.

10 *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast ; and his kingdom was full of darkness ; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,*

11 *And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.*

This fifth vial was poured upon Rome itself, upon the very seat of the Papal beast ; and his kingdom was full of darkness, so that they gnawed their tongues for pain, vexation of spirit, and despair. The corrupt hierarchy fell beneath "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." The vial was not one of a moment : it was years in being poured forth ; and as it was poured from the Divine hand, the Church of Christ rose higher and higher in glory, triumphing over all her foes ; as is seen under the *sixth* seal. (Rev. vi. from ver. 12.) We know how Luther stormed the Vatican ; rendered null and void all the Edicts issued by the Pope ; put down the sale of indulgences, with many other like corruptions ; and preached the truth of Christ in its Scriptural purity ; so that the case was just this : the Romish dominion was full of darkness, in rage and fury at its loss of authority and influence, and at the great change of affairs in the affairs of nations. Still, Rome has not repented to the renunciation of error and victory over the god Self, but rather blasphemes God because of her torment and her sin.

Exodus vii. viii. ix. x. should be read here, to see how these vials are rooted in the plagues of Egypt,—in the waters turned to blood, the plague of frogs, of boils and blains, of darkness, and in the overthrow of the Egyptian host. God grant to His people grace to overcome, that they may not be overcome in the fierce conflicts that now remain.

Chronologically this vial brings the date of the year down to 1332 of this Christian dispensation,—to the time of the calling of Wickliff. This was the beginning of the pouring out of it, but it continued to a later period ; as we have seen the third vial do, which was poured out upon the Jewish nation.

12 *And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates ; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.*

13 *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

14 *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

15 *Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*

16 *And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*

This sixth vial is still in the future : the four representatives of the Word of God are standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the winds of judgment while the Spirit of the living God seals His servants in their foreheads. (Rev. vii. 1, 2.) This is the moment we are now coming to ; and then this

sixth vial will be poured out upon the great Mohammedan power, that the Jews may return to their ancient inheritance. The resurrection of the dry bones, as described in Ez. xxxvii., will take place: they will receive Christ, and be Christians, for upon no other condition will God restore and receive them. The twelfth chapter of Daniel should be read here, for it refers as much to the return of Christ to His people as it did to His first advent. Zech. xiv. 4 should also be read. God will pour upon His ancient people the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they will look to Christ and mourn that they should have rejected Him.

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared.” This verse seems rooted in three events of past history: first, the dividing of the Red Sea for the passage of the Church from Egypt, and the deliverance of Israel from Pharaoh (Exod. xiv.); secondly, the dividing of the waters of the Jordan for Israel to go in and possess Canaan (Josh. iv.); and thirdly, the drying up of the Euphrates,—or rather, the turning of the channel of the river by Cyrus, so as to march his army up its dry bed into the very heart of Babylon, as it had been prophesied he should do three or four hundred years before. (Isa. xlv. 27, 28; xlv. 1, 2.) As the Divine word had gone forth concerning Babylon, so it has already gone forth concerning this great Mohammedan empire, and what is decreed will be fulfilled: “God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.” “And in that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.” (Dan. v. 26, 30.) From this verse in the Revelation being rooted in that history, I think as Nebuchadnezzar was a

type of the Romish beast of the Apocalypse, so Belshazzar was intended to be of this second beast, the false prophet. I repeat again, what a signal judgment will the destruction of that whole people be !

This expression, "The Kings of the *East*," seems rooted in the continuation of the ancient history. After Cyrus had taken Babylon, the Medes and Persians, more eastern people, "took the kingdom." (Dan. v. 28, 31.) The designation may be rooted also in Matt. ii. 1, 7, where "The wise men of the east" seem to have represented the faithful of the dispersed tribes. In this book of the Revelation, "The kings of the earth" represent everywhere the body of the visible Church, in distinction from the true hidden Church of Christ. (Rev. i. 5, 6 ; v. 10 ; xvi. 14 ; xix. 19.) And therefore this name, "The Kings of the East," may simply distinguish the Jewish from the Christian people ; as Jerusalem represents the first, and "The new Jerusalem" the last. (Rev. iii. 12 ; xxi. 2, 10.)

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." This word "*come*" in this verse is in italics to show that it is not in the original, and I think the mind of the Spirit would be better rendered without it. The dragon represents the old royal enemy that we have seen under the seals, and whom we have seen subjugated under the sixth seal (Rev. vi. from verse 12) ; so that I do not think this evil spirit comes out of his mouth, but that it is some Antichristian kingdom left of his vast dominions, and that did originally proceed from him. I think France is clearly intended, and that that power is reserved to play a great part in these last conflicts. Spain, Russia, with other

regal and imperial dominions, may also be represented by this dragon.

And so of the evil spirit out of the mouth of the beast,—it is a Romish power, that had its origin in Rome itself; it came out of its mouth, but it is not seen to *come* out of its mouth *now*, under this sixth vial. So also of the evil spirit out of the mouth of the false prophet,—it is an old remnant of Mohammedanism, and not a new existence after this sixth vial is poured upon that mystical Euphrates. These three again ally themselves to engage in one last struggle against the Church of Christ, in which they are defeated, taken, and consigned to the lake of fire, as the codicil to these vials explains. (Rev. xix. 20.) The last vial was rooted in the plague of darkness in Egypt; this verse is rooted in the plague of frogs. (Exod. viii. 1—14; Ps. lxxviii. 45; cv. 30.) This should be read fully to understand the spiritual conflict now at issue, or coming to an end. The unclean spirits, like frogs, are satanic spirits in living agents, as the next verse explains.

“They are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” I think this refers to the Romish pretension to work miracles, as we have seen the same in Rev. xiii. 14, and I have said the power there seen is Roman Catholic France. We have many revelations of evil spirits spoken of in the same figurative language. (Num. xxi. 6, 7; Ps. lxxv. 49; 1 Kings xxii. 21, 23.) Note well, that this dragon and beast, or corrupt Church and State are again in union. “And they go forth unto the *Kings of the earth*, and of the whole world.” These do represent the body of the visible Church, nominal professors of Christianity,

but who are really of the ranks of the enemy, as is explained in Rev. xix. 19. These are those to whom Christ says under the *seventh* Church, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." (Rev. iii. 15—17.) The enemy knows them in the day of conflict, and has them in reserve to bring up the rear: "To gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." This is called the *great day* of God Almighty, because the day is His, the victory is His; the battle is won, and the conflict finished. This takes place under the next vial, and therefore the thing is as good as already done.

This vial closes the sixth period. The next, the 15th verse, is a prophetic voice, just as we have seen a prophecy at the end of every history throughout this book.

"Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." This voice is that of God Almighty, whose day is proclaimed in the last verse. "I come as a thief" to that battle,—signifies, unexpectedly, quickly, and suddenly. The reference is to the end of the world now approaching,—to the end of the day of grace for these rebels of the Most High. The conflicts under the next, the seventh seal, trumpet, and vial, close the scene: "In the days of the voice of the *seventh* angel, when he shall *begin* to sound, the mystery of God should be finished." Then the day of grace is at an end, for the seventh vial is poured upon the evil spirit; and we read, "It is done."

"And *he* gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." That is, the God Almighty, whose great day had been proclaimed, gathered them together, the three cardinal hostile powers, with all the pretenders of the

earth, and of the whole world. They had too often provoked His anger, and here they have allied, rallied all their forces, and most impiously challenged God to battle once more ; but now the truth is revealed. He suffers or overrules that they shall do this for their own destruction : "When Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart." "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh : for I have hardened his heart." This dealing of God with him was judicial ; and so here : "*He gathered them together* into 'a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." We have seen the great body of the Mohammedans, Turks, and Infidels dried up, that the ancient people, the Jews, might go in and repossess their holy land and holy city, and therefore we may suppose the place into which the enemy now ventures, and into which God gathers them,—as He did the Egyptians into the Red Sea, for the display of His power and supreme rule,—I say, beyond all doubt, the enemy has now encamped somewhere about the holy city, the Christian Church, to besiege and to exterminate the people of God, if possible : as it is said in Rev. xiv. 20, "the winepress was trodden *without the city*." Armageddon means the mountain of the Gospel, or of fruits,—from Zion, the dwelling-place of the great King. (Ps. xlviii. 2 ; Matt. v. 35.) "In Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." (Joel ii. 32.) "Saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau ; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's." (Oba. 21.) "I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation : and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever." (Micah iv. 7.) But I might quote a hundred such passages to show that this

is the place into which these opposed armies are now gathered in battle array ready for the next conflict ; but whether it is for the one seen under the seventh trumpet (Rev. xi. 15), or under the seventh vial, or for both, I do not know ; suffice it to say, under the sixth vial, all is ready for the last conflicts, and the proclamation has been made : " Behold, I come as a thief."

Here closes the sixth period of 666 years,—the 1998 years of this Christian dispensation.

17 *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air ; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.*

18 *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings ; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*

19 *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell : and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*

20 *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

21 *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent : and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail ; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

The last battle of the world's history is now fought, and the victory is God's. But where precisely it will be fought, it is impossible for me to say ; perhaps the one seen under the seventh trumpet will be between the true Church, and some one of these Antichristian powers (Rev. xi. 15) ; and this under the seventh vial, between these allied powers (a remnant of the dragon,

beast, and false prophet) and the Jewish Church then in Canaan; they again rally all their forces, perhaps to take again "the Holy Land,"—the territory lost under the sixth vial. The expression, "Into a place called in the *Hebrew* tongue Armageddon," rather favours this supposition; the word notifies the ancient people. But be this as it may, we are sure all Christian powers will then be combined in one against these remnants of Antichrist.

But there is a phase of the people of God in this last seventh period of 666 years that I would particularly notice here,—one that must insure final and eternal victory. Rev. xviii. is a codicil to the *sixth vial*; and, as I have often said, there is much more seen to fall in that chapter than what is confined to the great Arabian and Turkish power. Much of the Babylon of ourselves must and will fall, for the blood of all slain in the earth will not be found in the skirts of Rome and the false prophet alone; but when the Babylon of ourselves is swept away, when the garment of the world and of the flesh is put off, the kingdom of God will come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Then let us pray most earnestly for the Pentecostal gift,—the most excellent gift of charity; that the whole body of Christ's Church may love as brethren,—love God with all the heart and soul and strength, and one's neighbour as one's self. But let us look at this last severance of the wicked from the just.

If it were not for the description of this closing scene in the end of Rev. xiv., we might think that the seventh vial will be poured upon the enemy, and that the Church of Christ will be left upon the field of action in possession of the whole world to enjoy her millennial rest. But from this chapter I cannot

help thinking that after this great conflict, in which God is the Victor, when all "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ" (Rev. xi. 15), that then some universal catastrophe will close the scene. "The earth was reaped" is written of the just as well as the degenerate vine of the earth (Rev. xiv. 16); or whether it only means a gathering of them together into the kingdom of God, I do not know. God will reveal these things as the time approaches.

From Rev. xix. 17 is a codicil to this seventh, the last, vial; and from the continuation of the history in Rev. xx. we gather that the resurrection of the just and the millennial reign will immediately take place; and therefore we may look at the seventh vial in its literal sense, and read in it the last great conflict between Christ in His people and the powers of darkness.

"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air." Air, fire, and water were pagan gods, and worshipped by them as the authors of life; and hence they became symbols of spirit, first to the Jews, and afterwards to the early Christians, because they borrowed their figurative language from pagan poets, and other writers. The writings of the prophets abound with these figures of speech; and also those of St. Paul, where we find the key to this seventh vial: "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. ii. 2.) "The prince of the power of the air" is the same being as "the prince of this world," so often spoken of by Christ,—the devil, or the evil spirit; and it is upon him this last vial is poured, referring to the unclean spirits out of the mouths of the dragon, beast,

and false prophet. (Rev. xvi. 18, 19.) Just as we have seen the *water* of the Euphrates represent the whole community of the Arabian and Mohammedan tribes, so here *air* represents the remnant of Satan's empire.

"For this purpose was the son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.) "That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. ii. 14.) At the period of this consummation of things we are now arrived,—the time of the final overthrow of the devil. And we understand Christ's proclamation, "I have the keys of hell:" His own Spirit, "the Spirit of truth," is that key.

"And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done:" that is, from the holy of holies of the Christian temple,—*"from the throne,"*—where we saw God enthroned in the beginning of this vision of the history of the world under the seals, trumpets, and vials (Rev. iv. 2—4). Now He says, "It is done." The enemy is vanquished, the conflict is finished, the battle is over, the victory is won, the day is God's in Christ: "It is done." This official announcement seems rooted in the declarations of God the Creator and God the Redeemer: "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen. i. 31.) "It is finished." (John xix. 30.) As He exulted in the work of creation and of redemption, so now, as the great Head of the Church, He exclaims from the mediatorial throne, "It is done:" "The mystery of God finished;" "The mystery of iniquity finished." The supreme Ruler is glorified in the saved Church, and in the degenerate vine cast into the fire to be burned. There is this fellowship, or spiritual oneness, of

the Church "with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 3.) As the One exclaimed, "Behold, all is very good," "It is finished," so the other must, "It is done." Oh, "God Almighty," in and through Christ we do thank Thee, that Thou art the Author, Sustainer, and Finisher of this conflict. "The hands of Zerubbabel:" this name means, a stranger in Babylon. He was a type of Christ, a stranger in Babylon the Great. "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it." (Zech. iv. 9.)

"And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings." As we have seen a prophecy at the end of every history in this book, so these thunders and lightnings are symbols of prophecy, and denote the great judgment day now at hand; the sharp arrow of the law and of Divine vengeance against the rebel powers now vanquished, and shortly to have the full penalty of the law executed upon them. For we must remember this is the seventh, the last, vial.

"And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." An earthquake was the known emblem of great political convulsions. (Hag. ii. 6, 7.) We have seen a continuous succession of these terrene shocks since the opening of the sixth seal (Rev. vi. 12; xii. 16); but here the revolution is more tremendous, and more fraught with mortal consequences. The empire of Satan that had again allied itself is finally rent to its own destruction. "And the great city was divided into three parts:" that is, the three unclean spirits out of the mouth of the dragon, beast, and false prophet, that had once more allied themselves to fight this great battle, are again

divided into three parts. "And the cities of the nations fell : " that is, of these three powers. "And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath." This verse is rooted in Jeremiah li., where God says, as Babylon had been a golden cup in His hand against Israel, so He would avenge the cause of His people upon Babylon. "Make bright the arrows, gather the shields, the Lord hath raised up the spirit of the Kings of the Medes : for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it, because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of His temple." And so here, the time of the destruction of this mystical Babylon is come : I say mystical, because in this verse, and in the next chapter, the Pagan Church of all ages, and the old dragon, or form of State government, are mystically one. They are now both together consigned to destruction.

But this is not the Babylon of Rev. xviii. : that chapter is a codicil to the *sixth* vial. This Babylon is the remnant of the dragon, beast, and false prophet, who had again allied themselves for this last conflict under the seventh vial ; as they are seen again in the codicil to it in Rev. xix. from ver. 17.

"And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." These islands do represent the communities of these antichristian powers, seated in many islands of the seas, and upon many waters. "The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (Rev. xvii. 15.) The figurative language is rooted in the same chapter in Jeremiah : "O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come." And these "mountains" signify the kingdoms of antichrist : the "nations" spoken of in the foregoing verse.

"And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent." Hail was the known emblem of the incursions of violent enemies. I think, here, these stones about the weight of a talent signify those ministers of justice sent by God to cut down the unregenerate "vine of the earth," seen in Rev. xiv. 17—20. The verse is rooted in many events of history; and if my reader will turn to them he will understand the figurative language. (Exod. ix. 18, 23, 26, 29; Josh. x. 11; Ps. xviii. 12, 13; Ezek. xiii. 11—13; xxxviii. 22.) "And men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." Here the Divine historian does not make any insertions as he had done before: "I gave her space to repent." (Rev. ii. 20.) "They repented not of their deeds." (Rev. x. 11.) There is now no space for repentance: the day of grace is at an end, the probationer on earth is arrested in his course. The seventh vial is justice without mercy; the Mediator is removed from His mediatorial throne, as it regards this, our seven day economy. This is the last plague, in which is filled up the wrath of God.

Here closes the seven periods of 666 years, from the time of the calling of Abraham to the end of 4662 years. The remainder of this Prophecy is codicils to the foregoing histories; the description of the eternal city, and a voice to the estate of Christ's Church when the Prophecy was written.

CHAPTER XVII.

THIS chapter is a vision of the Romish Church in the fifth period of 666 years ; and of her judgment in the sixth period : a codicil to the sixth trumpet.

1 *And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither ; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters :*

2 *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

3 *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness : and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*

4 *And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication :*

5 *And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

Before commencing the history of this chapter I would say that "The great whore" that is revealed in it, is the corrupt Church of the seven periods of 666 years, but principally of her in the fifth period,—the Romish Church in her climax of temporal glory.

We are not told here which of the seven angels with the vials came to John,—but one of them: from the tenth verse we gather it was the angel with the sixth vial. "There are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is." This dates the period, although an outline of history is given. The judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters was the principal thing to be revealed. In the world's history what waters has she not sat upon!

The Kings of the *earth* have been in unholy alliance with her; not only of pagan nations, of corrupt peoples, but also of those who were professedly God's people. The Jews were idolaters, the Kings of many European powers were idolaters; they worshipped the beast,—Rome (Rev. xiii. 8), and were supporters of that great corruption of Christianity. Kings of the *earth* is said in distinction from the kings and priests of God. (Rev. v. 10.) They may bear the name of Christian, but they are of the earth, earthy. "And the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication:" that is, those who were not genuine and steadfast believers, were forced into conformity with Rome,—were intoxicated and deceived by her false doctrine.

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness." This brings us to the *fifth* period: the word wilderness here marks the period (Rev. xii. 14), which verse is a codicil to the black page of history under the *fifth* seal. (Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11.)

“And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy.” This woman was Rome: sometimes she has reigned supreme, a sovereign pontiff in her spiritual usurpation; but for the most part she has been supported by regal and imperial power. The *blasphemy* of this power is its own enthronement and deification. Many dynasties of kings have reigned supreme, and acknowledged no higher power: they have known no other gods but themselves. In the Pharaohs we see this. And hence the opposition in the mind of Moses: “Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods?” And also in the Nebuchadnezzars. And again the same opposition in the three Hebrew children: “We will not serve thy gods, O king, nor worship the golden image thou hast set up.” These chapters in the Revelation are rooted in these ancient histories; and hence not only the blasphemy which is an assumption of Deity, but also the “seven heads” of this beast: he is the same spiritual usurper and implacable enemy of the seven periods of 666 years. His “ten horns” represent all the kingdoms of his dominion,—Romish, Turkish, French, Spanish, and any other. I shall show later how comprehensive is their signification: ten being simply a representative number.

“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls.” This is bedizened Rome: Rome in her temporal power and glory, in her purple and scarlet, in her riches, ornaments, paltry externals, and aggrandizement. “And men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself.” But let our adorning be “The hidden man of the heart, that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” Many people think, and even

apparently good Christians, that temporal power, riches, and great appearance tell in the advancement of the kingdom of God. In themselves they do not help one atom, and must be used with more humility than ordinarily falls to the lot of mortals to aid at all. Spiritual nature, the agent, God, only can be brought to work effectually. And hence the absurdity of this counterfeit, misnamed Church.

“Having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.” When we take the holy cup of the Eucharist, we commemorate the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in His blood which was shed for the remission of sins, which cleanseth from all sin. But this cup in the hand of that corrupt Church is full of false doctrine, and of unclean communion with other heresies as deep and foul as her own. And this is the meaning here,—her spiritual union with the great Mohammedan heresy, as seen under the fifth trumpet. (Rev. ix. 11.) But her own heretical abomination, that the “real presence” is in that cup, is enough to justify this strong expression: “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” And her whole system is just this, full of such swervings from the truth of deadly and damning heresies; such as was seen in the great Paris Exhibition,—an image of the Virgin, with these words, as Christ’s, held forth by her: “Come to Me by my mother.”

5 *And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

This word here, *mystery*, is a revelation of the spiritual union

of the Romish and Mohammedan, as seen under the fifth trumpet (Rev. ix. 11), to which I have so often referred. **Mystery** means a thing revealed, that could not have been known but by revelation. Thus do we read of "the mystery of iniquity." And there are not only those two spiritual enemies, but all pagan, Mohammedan, and false religions are included in the pale of this mystery. And so I think this **Babylon the Great**, here, is a more direct reference to the great mystical Euphrates, as seen spiritually allied with Rome, than of Rome alone. And hence the continuation of the revelation made: "**The Mother of Harlots**," the old Pagan Idolatress, the mother of all more modern corrupt churches; and also the author of all the abominations of the earth: that is, of human authority, regality, despotism, an overwhelming, vain, selfish, and thoughtless aristocracy, democracy, rebellion, poverty, hard toil, and all the train of evils arising from a disordered economy. The god Self is the author of all evil; and therefore Christ, who pleased not Himself, must be the author of all good. (Rom. xv. 3.) And hence the further revelation of what will be found in that corrupt, worldly policy: "**The blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.**" (Rev. xviii. 24.)

6 *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her I wondered with great admiration.*

7 *And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.*

Now that this prophecy is a page of history we can look back and see what was so graciously foreshown, most lament-

ably fulfilled. Millions of saints and of martyrs shed their blood for the noble testimony they bore ; the number of whom will never be known till their blood rises up to be accounted for at the last day. But what could have caused this expression of wonder and of admiration even in the mind of St. John is indeed a solemn question for the most sincere. Who is not flushed, deceived, betrayed by great and long success, by victories, by a seemingly approving Providence, by splendour, riches, and great temporal glory ? Who is not deceived when a people is utterly vanquished, cast out, and, as it were, cast off by God ? Ah, yes, I ask, Who then is not deceived ? This seems to have been the case with John : he was deceived. The Christian name may also have deceived him, for this woman in her culminated glory had named herself Christian ; but still we do inquire, How could the prophet have been deceived, with all that blood of saints and of the martyrs of Jesus upon her guilty head ? We can only answer, By that doctrine, and those depths of Satan (Rev. ii. 24), who may not be deceived,—so given over to believe a lie, so grossly deceived, that, as our Saviour said, “ He that killeth you shall think that he doeth God service ” ? And hence the rebuke of the angel, the earnest, warning explanation he immediately gave of the matter : he knew the peril of ignorance to be imminent, and to be great. “ Wherefore didst thou marvel ? I will tell thee the *mystery* of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the *seven* heads, and *ten* horns.” That was,—I will reveal to you the truth concerning her ; who she really is, what she really is, the mystery of her spiritual nature, that which can only be known by revelation. So changeable is her form, so artful her depths to disguise herself to deceive, that it is

only by revelation she can be known : it is only by revelation you can be effectually warned of danger.

8 *The beast that thou sawest was, and is not ; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition : and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world), when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

9 *And here is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.*

10 *And there are seven kings : five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come ; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.*

11 *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.*

The explanation of that mystery was simply this,—that the beast John had seen was Imperial Rome, spiritually one with Pagan Rome, as seen in Rev. xiii. 1, 2. “And is not,” relates to the time when Rome, and pagan Rome fell,—or, as we shall see, when the spiritual enemy migrated into Rome Papal ; or, as it is here added, referring to the history under the *fifth* seal, and the *fifth* trumpet, “And shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.” The spiritual enemy did so ascend again in Papal Rome, and in the Mohammedan power : “To him was given the key of the bottomless pit, and he opened the bottomless pit. They had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit.” (Rev. ix. 1 ; ii. 11.) In the fall of Papal Rome, the spiritual foe did go into perdition ; his overthrow was destruction and eternal ruin to him. But not before they that dwelt on the earth, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,

had wondered, "when they beheld the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." That beast, Imperial and Pagan Rome, that was, and was not, and again was in another form, was indeed a wonder, a great wonder; none but the elect of God (Oh, amazing, more wonderful mystery than that of the beast), whose names were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,—they did not wonder; they were enlightened by the Spirit of God, rightly instructed by the Word of God, resisted the infuriated beast, even in his wildest, maddest rage,—“The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath” (Rev. xii. 12),—and maintained the truth of Christ, to bonds and cruel deaths! Well might the angel so graciously explain the mystery, lest many like John should be startled into wonder, even to admiration at such bold exploit. But I would say here, the very particular notification, “The beast that was, and is not, and yet is,” may refer to the *fifth* seal, where I have shown there is no regal enemy, although the vision under the seals is of him. (Rev. vi. 9; x. 11.) There the Imperial power was merged in Papal Rome, as seen in the codicil. (Rev. xiii. 2.)

“And here is the mind that hath wisdom.” This is rooted in Rev. xiii. 18. This “wisdom” means Divine wisdom,—the direct teaching of the Spirit of God; and is, as is the wisdom there spoken of, a direct reference to Dan. ii. 14, 20, 21, 23, 28, 30; v. 11. No reason or human wisdom can divine the mind of the Spirit in this book. Christ alone, who dictated it, can explain it: He alone can give power to any human instrument to read it, as God gave Divine or supernatural wisdom to Daniel, to divine what no one else could. “There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets:” no study or grasp

of information can compass what is in His prerogative alone to reveal. My reader must refer to the passages I have referred to if he would understand the spiritual nature of this wisdom. He may see also Prov. viii. ; Job xxviii. from verse 1 ; 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

“The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.” Ancient Rome was built upon seven hills, and celebrated in prose and verse as the seven-hilled city and mistress of the Roman empire. From this circumstance almost all expositors of this book of Revelation have jumped to the conclusion that this woman is the Romish woman,—I do not like to write Church, because Christ will not award her that dignity. And they are right: she is Rome. But they should not rest satisfied with this contracted interpretation: the revelation of her admits of a far more extensive meaning. It may be rooted in that circumstance of the ancient city being built on seven hills: the portrait is an original one; but a mountain was the known emblem of a kingdom, and “the seven heads are *seven* kingdoms, on which the woman sitteth.” The portrait is alike true of this pagan woman in her periods of triumph whether in the past or in the future. The figurative language is still rooted in Dan. ii., iii., and iv.; particularly in Dan. ii. 35—45. The pagan woman, supported by the pagan regal enemy in the seven dispensations, is what is revealed. But in this chapter their climax of power and mystery in the fifth dispensation is more particularly intended. Not only are there seven kingdoms, but it is immediately added:—

“And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must

continue a short space." The mystical union of the regal beast with the woman is what is revealed: whether with the pagan or Romish idolatress she is the same. The language is still rooted in the history of Nebuchadnezzar, as is chapter xiii. "Let *seven* times pass over him;" "Seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." (Dan. iv. 16, 25, 32.) It is under the seven seals we see this regal enemy. "A crown was given to him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." (Rev. vi.) "Behold a great red dragon, having seven heads." (Rev. xii. 3.) The spiritual enemy is the same, although incarnated in human nature during seven periods of 666 years. I have shown the angel who showed John this vision was the angel with the *sixth* vial; and hence this verse that fixes the period: "*Five* are fallen, and *one* is, and the other is not yet come." I say this must be the voice of the angel of the sixth period: "And when the *seventh* cometh, he must continue a short space." This refers directly to Rev. x. 7: "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished:" that is, the day of grace at an end, for the seventh vial is poured forth as judgment without mercy; and from the proclamation of it, we may suppose very soon after the sounding of the seventh trumpet: "Behold, I come as a thief." (Rev. xvi. 15.) These are the seven sovereigns of Satan's empire. But the mystery that the angel would reveal was the spiritual union or oneness of the pagan woman with them: "I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her." And in these verses he did so.

"And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth,

and is of the seventh, and goeth into perdition." This verse is a prophecy at the end of the *regal* beast's history during seven periods of 666 years, such a prophecy as we have seen at the end of all histories throughout this book ; a prophecy of the loosing of the regal enemy, or Satan the adversary, after the millennial reign. "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. . . . And the devil was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx. 7, 10.) This is the eighth, spiritually of the seven, and who goeth into perdition.

12 *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet ; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.*

13 *These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.*

14 *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them : for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings : and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

15 *And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

I think these verses are a direct reference to the second beast in Rev. xiii. from verse 11, which prophecy or codicil, added to the revelation of the Romish beast, I have shown, signified France and Spain. We know how France had power to give life to the image of the beast,—to the Romish Church ; how it forced thousands to conformity,—to receive the name of Rome and the visible sign of that corrupt Church ; and how it forbade all commerce, intercourse, and communion with those who would not conform, and massacred by thousands those

who could not escape to find refuge in foreign lands. And we know how the refugees of France were as it were the origin of England's commercial greatness. Then I think these verses refer to the same power, and perhaps to other kingdoms then under the Romish dominion, for I have shown *ten* is a representative number in prophecy.

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast." These may include all the Emperors of Germany, who were submerged in Romish darkness but in the time of Luther shook it off as a garment of death, and received the Lord Jesus Christ, a garment of light and life. All those modern Powers had received no kingdom when this was written,—“as yet;” but they did receive power as kings one hour with the regal beast and his corrupt paramour. “These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.” So it did occur, and France still remains to give its power and strength to temporal glory,—to “The Prince of this world,” and, alas, to other powers also! The conflicts that still remain must be fought with these.

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them.” Here is the promise, here is that which must and shall be, and there is no possibility of failure. Much has been already done, but much remains to do, and nothing but the power of God can do it; “For He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” Here is the power of God and the constancy of the instrument combined, which Almighty alliance can never fail. May as much be done in the next three hundred years as has been done in the last three hundred, and

the cry will be heard, The kingdoms of this world are Christ's. But the retrograde movement of the present day must be stopped, or the conflict will be prolonged.

16 *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.*

17 *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.*

18 *And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

I have said these ten horns represent not only all the powers under the Romish dominion, but all the kingdoms of Satan's empire,—and so these ten horns of the 12th verse; and these of the 16th verse seem to represent two very different people, although all of the empire of Satan. These last do represent the great Mohammedan power, and the history of these 16th and 17th verses is that under the sixth trumpet (9th from the 13th verse), where Romanism is seen overcome by Mohammedanism; which I have shown was fulfilled by the territory that was taken from the Romish dominion by the Turks. Under the fifth trumpet we saw them spiritually allied, and under the sixth trumpet this disruption. "The ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." This is just what we have seen under the fifth and sixth trumpets; and I have there shown how Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Thrace,

Macedon, Greece, and all the countries which formerly belonged to the Greek or eastern Cæsars, the Turks conquered and subjugated to their dominion.

“And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” Throughout Scripture the Church of Christ is called a city; and so here. The simple meaning is that the woman of the 3rd and 5th verses is the pagan, heathen, Romish, corrupt Church of the world's history; and that the Kings of the earth are under her thrall, or spiritual dominion. She is supported by the beast; but in return he is under her yoke and tyranny. When will the world surrender to Him who said, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light”? (Matt. xi. 28, 30.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

THIS chapter is a continuation of the judgment of the great whore ; not of the Romish woman only, but now of the corrupt religion represented by the ten horns of Rev. xvii. 16. The last chapter brought us down to the history under the *sixth* trumpet. This continuation of the judgment is that under the *sixth* vial ; but much more is included in it than the drying up of the Euphrates. Still, the chapter is a codicil to the sixth vial.

1 *And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power ; and the earth was lightened with his glory.*

2 *And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.*

3 *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.*

4 *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out*

of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works : in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her : for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine ; and she shall be utterly burned with fire : for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,

10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city ! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her ; for no man buyeth her merchandise any more :

12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

14 *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.*

15 *The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,*

16 *And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls !*

17 *For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,*

18 *And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city !*

19 *And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness ! for in one hour is she made desolate.*

20 *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets ; for God hath avenged you on her.*

21 *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

22 *And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee ; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee :*

23 *And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee ; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no*

more at all in thee ; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth ; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

As I have said, this chapter is a continuation of history. The end of the last chapter was a codicil to the *sixth* trumpet, and this continuation is a codicil to the sixth vial.

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory." I think this angel is the angel or Church of Christ under the *seventh* trumpet: he simply proclaims what had occurred under the *sixth* vial. But he is in great authority: "having great power." It is the power that had been promised to those who should overcome the powers of darkness of the fifth and sixth periods: "He that overcometh, to him will I given power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." (Rev. ii. 26, 27.) This time is come. And we further read that the earth was, or will be, lightened with His glory. If my reader will turn to the history under the seventh trumpet, and the codicil to it (Rev. xi. to verse 15; xix. 11—16), he will see that it is the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church in this last period. The power is His, the light is His, the kingdoms of the world are become His: He, the faithful and the true, is the Conqueror, and His Church's name is "the Word of God;" so that the right means—spiritual weapons—must lead on to the end of the conflict, to triumphant result. And hence the downfall of this worldly polity, of this artificial economy. It is not of the heathen world only, nor of the Romish corruption only, but of the whole mass of corruption, —of corrupt Protestantism, as well as of the great corruptions

of Christianity : it must all pass away. And if the Church of Christ be diligent and faithful, the seventh period of 666 years will have made more gigantic strides, be more in advance than she has been during this preceding period. There is much to clear away, much to put down, much to level. The most excellent gift of charity must be brought from heaven by prayer. Christ was our Example, and we know we are still very unlike Him : the god Self occupies the place in the human heart that love to God and to our neighbour ought to occupy. Equality will be the headstone that will be brought forth with shoutings, Grace, grace unto it ! and nothing but a pentecostal gift of love can bring it from above. "All that believed were together, and had all things common ; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need." (Acts ii.) 1 Cor. xiii. should be read here, and we shall see how far below we are of that standard of sanctification that God, through Christ, proposes for His people. It has been said, "Show me a people where trade is dishonest, and I will show you a people where religion is a sham." Then have we not to fear that our religion is very superficial, almost display ; for we know our commercial state is notoriously dishonest, and our overwhelming civilization—bread, indeed—but a burden to the working-classes. In this chapter we see the burden fall : the description is one of the most graphic that was ever penned. It is impossible not to see our own portrait in this economy called Babylon the Great : if we are honest it is impossible not to recognise ourselves, not to admit the truth of our fornication with her.

"And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen. . . . For all nations have drunk of

and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city ! for in one hour is this judgment come." Here the members of another body are involved in the parent corruption, in fornication with the old "Harlot," and lamenting most piteously her destruction, so as to reveal how much the soul and spirit are enthralled. The fellowship and oneness of soul and spirit with her is truly lamentable.

"Also, the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, *for no man buyeth their merchandize any more*: the merchandize of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet." I would have my reader note what a reversal, what a renouncement. The order of things is changed ; the economy of vanity and folly, and of worldliness we live under, is passed away : no one will be duped by traffics in these things, no one tempted, no one deceived : the lust of the eye, and the pride of life have passed away. The words are most expressive : "The fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all." I say, what a change ! And under the sixth vial and the seventh trumpet it really will take place : the world and the flesh will be overcome. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith." (1 John v. 4.) "And Christ said, Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." He did trample it beneath His feet ! But oh, what an amazing, stupendous, glorious victory will that be when the Church, His kingdom, shall be triumphant over the world, as is described in

this chapter. The garment of the flesh has fallen from off her shoulders.

“The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought.” This may refer to the enormous revenues and riches raised by the Church of Rome, by selling indulgences, and such like illicit means; but all such self-aggrandizement at the expense of others, seems to be included in it.

And then the voice passes on to all the company in ships, and sailors, and to as many as trade by sea. When they see the smoke of the burning of this great city, they cast dust on their heads, and cry, weeping and wailing, “Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.” I say, it is impossible for us to understand what is included in this city, in Babylon the Great. It cannot mean the Romish Church only; it cannot mean the religion of the false prophet only; nor all the pagan and heathen religions of the world only. It takes in a much broader circumference than all these. It comes near home, and embraces the corruption of the world; of our own economy as well as of others: “The woman which thou sawest is that great city, *which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*”

Here is a general involvedness in the corrupt principle; and in Rev. xviii. is as complete a disseveration: but by what miracles of grace it will be brought about we do not know.

None but God through Christ in His people can lead them on to this culminating point of true holiness, peace, and glory; for perfect peace, and a perfect reign of glory must proceed from obedience to the Divine law of love, from subjection to the Divine command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength; and thy neighbour as thyself." Who art thou, oh great empire of Satan! Before Christ thou shalt become a plain, and He shall bring forth this "headstone with shoutings, Grace, grace unto it."

The lament of the one party who had been involved in this great Babylon, and the heartfelt deliverance of the other party, are distinct, and very striking: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven,"—the whole community of God's people,—“and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.” The destruction of the city is rooted in the destruction of Sodom; and so we see there will be hearts left in the ruins of Babylon the Great, even as the heart of Lot's wife turned back to that doomed city. And therefore, if the destruction relates to Rome only, what a revelation of hearts still enthralled therein, in her evil-gotten treasures and riches! And may we not fear, without voices from God Himself to warn them of their peril, they would now, even now, return into her corrupt bosom?

I have here gone through this chapter very cursorily because in my last volume on the Apocalypse I have gone through it very fully. I therefore rather refer my reader to the details there gone through, than to this outline; only that there, a long conflict with this mystical woman is set forth, and here it is shortened to the period of seven periods of 666 years. Be this as it may, at the end of time we see her cast as

a millstone into the depths of eternal woe, to rise no more at all. No voice of the bride, the Church, is heard any more in her; nor the voice of the Bridegroom,—Christ. Her state is fixed, and the door of mercy closed hides her from our view.

“And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” Who may not fear that blood may be laid to their account? Who in this general ruin may not say with David, “Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God”?

CHAPTER XIX.

IN this chapter the Christian Passover is kept by the universal Church, to return thanks, and praise, and blessing to Almighty God for deliverance from the corrupt woman, from the world, and the garment of the flesh. From the 11th to the 16th verse is a codicil to the *seventh* trumpet; and from the 17th to the 21st verse is a codicil to the *seventh* vial; for it must be remembered I said the 18th chapter is a codicil to the *sixth* vial. I shall so divide this 19th chapter into three parts.

1 *And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia! Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:*

2 *For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*

3 *And again they said, Alleluia! And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.*

4 *And the four and twenty elders and the four cherubim [or living creatures, the representatives of the Word that had gotten this victory] fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen: Alleluia!*

5 *And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.*

6 *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia ! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*

7 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

8 *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white : for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

9 *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

10 *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not : for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus : worship God : for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

“And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia ! Salvation, and glory, and honour and power unto the Lord our God.” That is, after the subjugation of the Romish beast under the sixth trumpet, and of the great Mohammedan power under the sixth vial. It was the common custom of the Jews after any great deliverance to go up to the Temple of the Lord to return thanks, and to give glory to Almighty God for such deliverances, to acknowledge Him to be the supreme Ruler and Controller of the affairs of men. The institution of the Passover after their deliverance from Egypt was the origin of the national festival (Ex. xv.) ; and from that time the command was ever joyfully obeyed.

(Neh. viii. ; ix. ; Esth. viii. ; ix.) And this is just the meaning here, only that the Festival is changed from the Jewish to the Christian Passover. The vision opens in the beginning of the seventh period of 666 years. I think to the 4th verse the anthem is of the Jewish Church in Canaan, after her great deliverance from the people represented by the mystical Euphrates ; and then from the 5th to the 10th verse it is of the universal Christian Church. The great voice of much people in heaven in the 1st verse simply means in the community of God's people, which was represented by the Holy of Holies of the Temple.

The true and righteous judgments of God in judging the idolatrous woman of all ages, for corrupting the earth with her fornication, and for avenging the blood of the saints, is the burden of the hymn of praise. Idolatry is the world's sin, although "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" was the first great commandment of the law. God, the eternal Spirit, is the true object of worship ; and any one object that comes between Him and the soul, whether it be a corrupt Church, the god Self, or any other unlawful passion of the soul, it is idolatry ; and hence this ascription of salvation, glory, and power to God alone.

"And again they said, Alleluia,"—which means, Praise the Lord : "And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." As Babylon was built on the Euphrates it was natural they should represent these hordes of people now occupying those regions ; for the Mohammedans are the last people who have now fallen, although this triumph is over all false religions. The language is still rooted in the destruction of Sodom : "Lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." (Gen. xix. 28.)

And then all the representatives of the Jewish community are represented as again falling down and worshipping God for the great deliverance.

The 5th verse is an official command from the inner sanctuary of the Lord's house to the universal Church, to praise God. Nothing more or less than a public proclamation for a day of general thanksgiving. And then the Church of Christ, of every clime, and tongue, and nation and people—wherever seated, upon whatever water—breaks forth in the same way into one loud anthem of thanksgiving and praise, "Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."* The mighty thunderings proclaim the great Judgment day at hand.

Then the Lord's Supper is celebrated, and a general rejoicing testified throughout the community, that the time of the spiritual and eternal union of the universal Church with the Lamb is come,—not of one section of it, not of a few in some isolated corner of the earth, but of the whole congregation of the kingdoms of this world. And to her is granted that she should be arrayed in the justifying righteousness of her Head, in the glory of her God. And she is pronounced blessed, because she had been thus called to glory and honour.

When John would have worshipped the angel who showed him these things, the angel forbade him, and said, "See thou do not : I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus : worship God : for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." It will be seen in a moment that this angel's rebuke, his refusal to be worshipped,

* This anthem of thanksgiving, and of praise to Almighty God, not only tells us that the victory has been alone of Him, but also that we must look to Him alone for the victory.

was to reveal to us the purity of the true Church, in distinction from the corruption of the Church of Rome, which had exacted homage: that gorgeous Church is the image of the prince of this world, and in her he exacts worship. The angel said he was only the witness for Jesus of these things; but that his testimony was "the spirit of prophecy"—the very truth of God. Such is the position we should ever take,—the agents or servants of Jesus Christ; and utterly scorn the idolatry of creature worship.

11 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

12 *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself:*

13 *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Word of God.*

14 *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

15 *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

16 *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."*

It will be seen in a moment this is a codicil to the *seventh* trumpet, Rev. xi. from verse 15; but here the detail is fuller, and the nature of the conflict more plainly revealed. There we read, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." Here we read,

Christ, "the Word," is "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." The period is the same, His kingdom is come—that for which we daily pray—and the power and the glory are His. Let us look at the scene of action as it is presented to us, and we shall see it is the same as under the seventh trumpet.

"And I saw heaven opened,"—that is, the Holy of Holies of the Christian temple,—“and behold a white horse:” it will be seen in a moment this vision is in distinction from the one under the seals in Rev. vi., where the evil spirit in a regal usurper is seen to go forth conquering, and to conquer. Now, Christ is seen to go forth in His people, also upon a conquering white horse, “conquering, and to conquer.” “And he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness doth He judge and make war.” Oh, how is the economy of the Church, of the estate of God’s people, changed in this seventh period! the transition period from the dark ages to this sixth period of the reformed Church was not greater than there will be again in this seventh period. Who now is faithful, who now is true, but then the Church will wage war only with spiritual weapons, and a far more glorious victory will be hers.

“His eyes were as a flame of fire.” This is rooted in the description of Christ, in Rev. i. 14, ii. 18. “And on his head were many crowns.” This may be written as of the high priest under the Jewish economy (Ex. xxv. 11; xxiv. 30—33; xxvii. 2, 11, 12, 26), or it may be in reference to the kingdoms won under the seventh trumpet. They are now become Christian,—crowns upon Christ’s head (Esth. viii. 15): “Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.” (Pa. xxi. 3.) “And

he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself." I have said that this Being is Christ in His Church : and hence this name written. It is the same promised by Christ in Rev. ii. 17 : "I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." The white stone is the stone of office, the Holy Spirit,—that which the Urim and Thummim signified : and the name written there is Christian,—Christ's own nature. And so this identifies this being in Rev. xix. 11 : it is the Christian Church, with Christ so dwelling in her that she is called by His name. If my reader will turn to some other passages he will see this. (Isa. lxii. 2 ; Acts ii. 26 ; Rev. iii. 12.)

"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood." This is rooted in other parts of this book : "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. vii. 14.) "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. xii. 11.) Now the mystical regeneration and sanctification is complete,—the Church is clothed, absolutely clothed, in garments dipped in the blood of Christ, and is thus proof against further harm. The language seems borrowed from the molten sea, which was for the priests to wash in (2 Chron. iv. 6) ; the antitype of which is, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood. . . . And hast made us unto our God kings and priests." (Rev. v. 9.) "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. xiii. 14.) When the Church is thus clothed in Christ's obedience to death, even to the death of the cross, through faith in Him, actual righteousness by the indwelling of His own Spirit must be the consequence ; and she will then stand complete as here represented,—a Christian warrior, a vessel fitted for her Master's use. And

hence the noble designation here appointed to Him by God : "And His name is called, The Word of God." The Church now bears the name, and nature, and stamp, and image of God,—of Christ, "the Word : " she is warring alone with the spiritual weapons He fought and conquered with, and she must conquer also.

"And the armies in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." These armies now in heaven refer to those kingdoms now gathered into the kingdom of God,—to those seen under the *seventh* trumpet, to which history I have said this is a codicil. The white horses again identify them victors : and the clothing of fine linen, white and clean, denotes that they, like the being on the white horse in the 11th verse, have come by the same old orthodox route,—through the blood of the Lamb ; and that they have put on His righteousness, even the purity of His holy Spirit.

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations." This sharp sword is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God : " note, it proceeds out of the Christian warrior's mouth, out of the abundance of his heart ; for in the foregoing verse we have seen it to be his name and nature. The language is again rooted in Rev. i. 16 : "Out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." (Rev. ii. 12.) It is now Christ in the Church, warring with His own spiritual weapon : "And He shall rule them with a rod of iron." This is rooted in the prophecy of Christ (Ps. i. 9), and in the promise to the *fourth Church* (Rev. ii. 27). The time is now come for Christ to rule and reign in the midst of her. "And He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God." Christ is now the Minister of Justice, and He

is executing justice without mercy: the day of grace for the still impenitent rebel host is passed. This is the same being, and it is the same period, spoken of in Rev. xiv. 17: "Another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle." The enemies of Christ are falling, and His people are triumphant.

"And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." This is simply to note that this page of history in the codicil relates to that under the seventh trumpet. (Rev. xi. from verse 15.) The kingdoms of this world are subjugated to Christ; and He is publicly proclaimed King of kings and Lord of lords. This Christian warrior simply bears this title as the ambassador of Christ (2 Cor. v. 20) and the representative of His Word. He is not ashamed now to call Him both Lord and King,—to proclaim he has been warring in His name. The victory of the Word of God, or of Christ incarnate in that Word, is what is here proclaimed. This writing upon the vesture is of Jewish origin, as HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD was upon the mitre of the high priest: so there were typical characters upon the robe of the ephod. (Ex. xxviii. 31—34.) As we have seen the description of this Being rooted in the description of Christ in the seven candlesticks, in Rev. i, which reveals to us His presence ever with His people—His eternal priesthood, and the purity of it,—so here the description is carried on. This ambassador of Christ is represented in Christ's own holy canonicals,—one might almost say in His Almighty attributes, because it is Christ the victor in His people: "Lord of lords, and King of kings."

"And upon his thigh a name written," seems to be rooted in

the Psalm I have before referred to : "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou mighty One, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness ; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies." The Spiritual Sovereignty of God in His people through Christ is what is revealed to us by this title.

Here closes the codicil to the *seventh* trumpet; the kingdoms of this world are become Christ's.

17 *And I saw an angel standing in the sun ; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God ;*

18 *That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

19 *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.*

20 *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

21 *And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth : and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

This third, and last part of this chapter is a codicil to the *seventh* vial. Or rather I should say, the seventeenth and

eighteenth verses are a proclamation of the conflict under the last vial, and the remaining three verses are a codicil to it.

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun;" this angel means a herald. "And standing in the sun" means, in the community of God's now glorious people: the expression is a reference to the effulgent title, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." The sun, means a mighty potentate. (1 Tim. vi. 15.) Other passages confirm this interpretation: "The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory." (Ps. lxxxiv. 11.) "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings. And He shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Mal. iv. 2, 3.) This time is now come.

No one can have seen, or read, of a field of the dying and the dead after a great battle without understanding the call of this angel, "To all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, to come and eat the flesh of kings, captains, mighty men, the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them." The voice is most graphic, and as I have said, in anticipation of to-morrow's battle. It is rooted in passages of Scripture. "The Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine. . . . This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." (1 Sam. xvii.)

"Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, assemble yourselves, and come. . . . Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth. . . . And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you." (Ezek. xxxix. 17—21.)

The next three verses are a codicil to the seventh vial,—to that battle in the place Armageddon, for which we see three unclean spirits out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, under the sixth vial (Rev. xvi. 13, 14), to gather them together to fight that battle. They are the remnant of the empire of Satan scattered over the world.

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." If my reader will compare this history with that under the *seventh* vial, he will see it to be the same. (Rev. xvi. from ver. 17.) But note of whom this army is composed,—the beast, the regal and ecclesiastical enemies: they are here merged in one, because they are spiritually one. "And the kings of the earth and their armies." These do still represent nominally professing Christians, as they do throughout this book, in distinction from the kings and priests unto

God. (Rev. i. 5, 6.) We see the same severance of them from the true Church of Christ under the *seventh* Church. (Rev. iii. from ver. 14.) We have seen His long teaching, providential dealing, and long-suffering with them (Rev. ix. 4—6; ii. from ver. 20; xvii. 2; xviii. 3, 9, 10; xvi. 14, 15); but now their doom is come. In this last battle the truth is manifested on whose side they were. They had long been fornicators and unscriptural Christians, but now they are unmasked, and found to be traitors. The hour of temptation, to try them that dwell on the earth (Rev. iii. 10), has come, and they are found in the ranks of the enemy: "Gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." Why did they not declare themselves before? Why this hypocrisy up to the last moment? The three allied Antichrists knew their confederates, they knew where to go for reinforcements in their last dire extremity; they had them in reserve, although they had let them remain within the pale of the Church of Christ, the better to assure them of safety, to beguile them to destruction. This Divine warning voice to this nominally professing body, throughout this book, is very remarkable; and this last unmasking of that body is not less striking. Christ said, "He that is not against us, is for us." This is the amazing altitude of free and sovereign grace; but it is also its limit. This professing body is at last found against Christ: "and they are slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth." Their punishment is that which Christ told them of: "Those mine enemies, which would not that I should *reign* over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me." (Luke xix. 27.) "And all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

doom of the beast and the false prophet is even more than theirs. "These both were cast alive into a lake burning with brimstone." It is a relief to believe that who have been deceived by them will come under a more sentence than they themselves, the authors of all the iniquities of the earth. As in heaven there will be degrees of glory, so in hell there will be degrees of punishment. But damnation is an awful thing, even in its most lenient form, and an expression may be used with regard to the state of the damned: Christ removed, is hell.

It is shown that the destruction of Babylon the Great, the commonalty of these two beasts, is rooted in the iniquity of Sodom; and hence this lake of fire burning with brimstone. It is the gulf of their own nature, Satanic in origin—hell; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. *Cast alive* into this lake signifies remorse, and repentance of an awakened conscience when too late. The second beast is called here "the false prophet," from Revelation 19. The prophet of God is now found to be the true prophet; and himself "the false prophet."

This closes the codicil to the history under the seventh seal, and it brings us down to the end of the seventh period of years.

CHAPTER XX.

IN this chapter the old regal enemy is taken and cast into the bottomless pit. The kingdom of Christ is universal, or Millennial. After which the usurper is again loosed, and goes into perdition, and the great judgment day is described.

1 *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*

2 *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.*

3 *And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*

This angel is Christ; but whether in the Church, or whether in His Personal Presence I do not know. I think the former, and that her history will thus develop into a perfect state. "From heaven" simply means from a position of Divine power. But if Christ in the Church be meant, this description is very striking; for He said, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. i. 18.) And the angel of this verse has

the key of the bottomless pit, which is the gulf of endless misery ; so that Christ's Spiritual Presence must ever be equal, and one with His Personal Presence. The great chain proclaims Him to be the Conquerer, and Satan the captive ; the keeper of the prison, and Satan, the adversary, the prisoner ; the God, and the rebel power subjected.

"And he laid hold on the *dragon*, that old *serpent*." These two figures represent the regal enemy of the seven periods of 666,—the Jewish and the ancient monarchy, Egyptian and Assyrian, with all modern powers. (Isa. xxvii. 1.) "Which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him that he should *deceive* the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled : and after that he must be loosed a little season." It is one of the most melancholy and lamentable facts in the world that people are *deceived* by this *regal* enemy,—old and young, rich and poor. Oh, I say, it is melancholy to see youth beguiled by this enemy ! What might we not do if the King of kings and the Divine Government were set as prominently forward as is royalty and regal dominion ! We want more public spirit to confess God : more love and loyalty to Him. Let me ask my reader whence this development of the Church's history ? Whence the constitution of the Millennial reign that now follows in this chapter ? Whence the Millennium at all ? The answer is just this,—Because this old *regal* enemy, the usurper of the world's history, is captured, subjugated, and cast out, and Christ is reigning in his stead, it may still be in His people. Christ reigning will be the Millennium. We want no other change or form of Government to bring it about than this : "Then cometh the

end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." (1 Cor. xv. 24.) This time is now come : the spiritual hierarchy is formed, and Christ is its spiritual Head.

4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them : and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

5 *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

6 *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

The first part of this 4th verse is rooted in Matt. xix. 27 : "Then Peter answered, and said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee ; what shall we have therefore ? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This time is now come : the kingdom of God is established upon the earth, and the Church of Christ is to reign with Him a thousand years. "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion,"—the dragon's, which we have seen done,— "to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom

under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." (Dan. vii. 9, 13, 14, 26, 27.) This was written of the receiving of the Gentile world by Christ in His first Advent; but it relates also to the Millennial period to which we are now come.

"And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

It would be quite impossible to understand the mystery of the martyr throng of the world's history if it were not for such an explanation of it as this. The world may look on and think God passive, God powerless, God unmindful of His saints, but the day of the first resurrection will declare far otherwise. What a day of triumph, of glory, of reunion, of peace, of joy, of physical and spiritual blessedness,—it is impossible for us to conceive! If they came out of "great tribulation," their cup of blessing is now beyond all proportion. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." One scarcely likes to think of vengeance so dire as expulsion upon one's enemies, of triumph so transcendent, of an estate so superlative above all that we could ask or think. Oh, that it could embrace the world! Oh, that in "the dispensation of the fulness of times" it may embrace all! And not only cover an area of "a thousand years," but eternity itself.

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand

—

years were finished. This is the first resurrection." And then the angel proclaimed simultaneously and voluntarily, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." And do we not say the same with him? Like St. Paul, should it not be our daily aim to attain to it? And should we not leave all other cares far behind, that we may be thus blessed, and our souls saved in this first resurrection? "Here is the patience of the saints." May we have patience to suffer the will of God, having the eye of faith steadfastly fixed on the end; for a want of patience is a want of faith. And then we should solemnly reflect on what we shall escape: "On such the second death hath no power." The 14th verse tells us this second death is to be cast into the lake of fire; so that it is not only the blessedness to be obtained by attaining to the first resurrection, but the state of shame and contempt and punishment to be escaped by those who shall rise first. "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Who would like to miss these thousand years of service to God and Christ? They are almost more inspiring than the reward of reigning with Him.

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10 And the devil, that deceived them, was cast into the lake of

fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Here is a positive fact revealed,—that after seven periods of 666 years, and after the Millennial period of a thousand years at the end of them, Satan, the adversary, will be loosed out of his prison; this was foretold also in Rev. xvii. 11: “The beast that was, and is not, even he is the *eighth*, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” This eighth beast is the same old spiritual enemy as of all the seven. “Let seven times pass over him.” (Dan. iv. 6.) I have before said that the Millennial reign was the natural consequence of that regal usurper being chained and cast into the bottomless pit. Now he is loosened for the trial of the loyalists of Christ, the King of glory. Having tasted of the fruits of obedience and loyalty, will they be tempted to eat again of the bitter fruits of rebellion? No: a thousand years of experience have satisfied them upon that point.

From the wording of the 8th verse we gather that the army, “Gog and Magog,” are a body of persons who live again after the thousand years are finished: not of the old pagan beast, nor of the false prophet, but of the family of Jehovah,—of the visible body of the Church of Christ, who had been *deceived* by the regal enemy, the old dragon: and oh, how many are there who have been *deceived*! These, Gog and Magog, do represent a portion of the descendants of Japheth, and it may be even of Shem. If my reader will turn to Gen. ix. 27; x. 1, 5; Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix., he will see the generation of Japheth of our day economy, and understand who are this large body who is said to have been *deceived*. I do not say another day of grace and of choice is given to them, I do not

venture an opinion ; but here is conflict beyond our seven period economy, and we may well suppose their doom will be different to that of the instigators of rebellion. Satan goes out again to *deceive* them, and even to gather them together to war against the saints and the beloved city : and fire comes down from God out of heaven to devour the finally rebellious.

“And the devil that *deceived* them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever.” This will be the portion of the three cardinal evil spirits,—or of the one evil spirit, the original instigator of all evil : but should we not pause here to reflect upon the subject of *deception*,—upon the fact that the devil is about thus to *deceive* ? And the most extraordinary feature of that deception is, whether as relating to the Romish heresy, or to the regal corruption, that the persons so *deceived* are as confident, as much at ease, and as much believe themselves to be right and safe, as those who are orthodox and whose faith has really eternal truth for its foundation. It is by Revelation we know they are deceived. But many thousands, it may be millions, will not know it till they awake under condemnation, when the state of the man without the wedding garment will be theirs. They will be confounded, speechless, paralyzed by surprise and despair. Then how should we take the Word of God for our rule, that we may not be *deceived*, nor our souls lost !

11 *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them.*

12 *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which*

is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works.*

14 *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

15 *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

The eighth period of conflict completed, the great Judgment Day is come. Under the *seventh* trumpet we heard it prophesied of. (Rev. xi. 19.) We there saw the ark of the covenants opened preparatory to it, and the arrows and judgments of the broken law go forth from them against the wicked : now the day is come, and the righteous and the wicked stand before God.

“And I saw a *great white* throne.” This throne is now universal, and supreme : “white” is figurative of the purity of Divine justice. “And Him that sat on it.” It is God in Christ now seated upon this judgment throne. Matt. xxv. from ver. 31 should be read with this vision of the great Judgment Day ; the descriptions in principle are the same. “From whose face the earth and the heavens fled away ; and there was found no place for them.” The earth and the heaven here represent the redeemed Church, and those without her pale, as they do throughout this book. In their native selves, standing upon their own ground, they will alike flee away from the presence of the pure, holy, high, and exalted Judge : the law, and the light of Divine justice would so flash the fire of condemnation that the conscience would be burdened with

guilt, and the creature would in a moment be consumed. Nor would any place of refuge be found for him.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." Difficult as it is to recognise this scene, this fact, come it will, and in that day every being that has ever lived will stand before God. "And the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." These "books" are the books of the laws of Moses: and this other "book," the book of the covenant of grace and life in and through Christ.

If my reader will turn to Exod. xxiv. 7, 8; Heb. ix. 19, he will see these "books" and this other "book." When God had given the tables of the law to Moses, with all the other Divine laws that He afterwards gave, they were condemnation to the people: the thunders, lightnings, and smoke of Sinai proclaimed judgment. But when the blood of sacrifice was applied both to the book and to the people, the act became a new covenant,—a covenant of grace through the Sacrifice who was to take away the sin of the broken law by bearing the punishment of it Himself. This was a new covenant in distinction from the first covenant of works, or of the law. And it was this the great Sacrifice referred to when He said, "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. xxvi. 29.) That was, My blood that is now about to be shed, is the antitype, or fulfilment of the blood of the covenant of grace made at Sinai. New, in distinction from the covenant of the law. And these two covenants are the "books" and "book" now opened. And the risen throng are judged out of those things which were written

in the books, according to their works. That is, those who had trusted for salvation to their obedience to the law, were judged by the law; and those who had believed the things written in the New Testament, and taken up their ground upon them, were judged by them. Of the first, their condemnation is certain, because, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified." The thing is impossible: "All have sinned;" and the assertion is not more sweeping than true. But for those who will be judged according to the things written in the new covenant, in the New Testament, in the precious book of life, and of life eternal, they will all be acquitted. "By Him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 39.) "Being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." (Rom. v. 9.) "He that believeth in Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John iii. 18; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Gal. iii. 10, 11, 13.) These are the things written in "the book of life:" I stake my soul on them; and pray the Lord Jesus Christ upon that great white throne that I may be judged by them! "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." (2 John v. 11.)

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged *every man according to their works.*" This assertion that they shall be judged according to their works, twice recorded, alike of the righteous and the wicked, does not alter the fact that they will be judged out of those things written in

the books. Faith and doctrine shape and form works ; and therefore the works of believers will be good and holy, while the works of these two beings, Death and Hell, will be those of their own nature, murderous, and hellish. It will be seen in a moment these two beings, Death and Hell, are the same as in Rev. vi. 8, under the *fourth* seal,—Imperial Rome and the Romish Antichrist spiritually allied with the Mohammedan power, which “followed with him” under the *fifth* seal, and the *fifth* trumpet. In Rev. xviii. 24, it is written of Babylon the Great, which signifies those two powers, “In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and all that were slain upon the earth.” These were their works : now, in the great Judgment Day, they are called to deliver up the dead which were in them, to render an account of them, and to be judged according to those murderous works. And then hear their sentence, or rather see the execution of it : “And Death and Hell”—these two same beings—“were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” Oh, let us not think that the door of oblivion closes at death ! All works of darkness will receive their reward ; as faith and consequent obedience will receive theirs.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” We see here there will be but two parties,—all will be included in the body of Death and Hell ; as I have shown from the 18th chapter, in that great city, Babylon the Great, whose names are not found written in the book of life. I repeat again,—Here I stake my soul ; and pray that in that great day, by free and sovereign grace my name may be found written there ! But who can estimate aright that grace Divine, that spirit of adoption, reconciliation, love, and peace that can be found in Christ alone ! Let us live as beings

confident of this great possession, and really dead to all beside. "If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him."

The punishment of him that wanted the wedding garment is the finest illustration of this subject that I know of. (Matt. xxii.) The wedding garment is the imputed righteousness of Christ; and the consequence of the justified state, the actual righteousness of His own Spirit, the sanctified state. "Whom He justified, them He also glorified."

CHAPTER XXI.

THIS chapter is a description of a new heaven and a new earth : of the eternal city, and of an eternally glorified people.

1 *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea.*

2 *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

3 *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

4 *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away.**

Suffice it here to say, that this new heaven and new earth not only signify a new physical nature, but also a new spiritual

* The writer refers her readers to her explanation of these two chapters in her last volume on the Apocalypse.

constitution. When God said by Isaiah, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isa. lxv. 17), He spake first of the Christian economy. It was a promise that the Jewish economy should find its fulfilment in a more glorious one: "For, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." Time is thus developing the purpose of God; ruin and decay are but the harbinger of a more glorious day. Time is said to devour its own offspring: and this is so. Let us look at the seven periods of the past of this book of Revelation in the light of this new economy, and trace the sublime development. The first period of grace, from the time of Abraham to David, was one of promise, of covenant, and of type difficult to be understood; that economy was one of dark symbols and voices. The period of the Prophets was one of more Divine light; the voices were more audible and better understood; God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was nearer to His people. The third period was one of hard travail, for the true hidden Church, to bring forth the Messiah. Only in such spiritual darkness and groaning could He have been brought forth. In the fourth period He was brought forth, and Christianity with Him: the glorious light of Gospel truth illumined the world,—time overcame the darkness of the past. The fifth period was another night of travail and of groaning, to bring forth truth, light, and life, in more established form,—in bolder and more impregnable constitution: to bring forth the Holy Ghost in His manifold gifts and inspirations. And thus this sixth period has been one of advance, development, and glory never known to the world before,—an advance toward the culmination of light, grace, and glory in the seventh period. In that

seventh period we see the kingdoms of this world become Christ's: His universal reign established upon the earth. Then a thousand years of that reign, undisputed and uninterrupted; then a conflict to bring forth permanency: the great judgment day; and then the new economy. The new heaven and the new earth we behold in this twenty-first chapter. God be praised for the revelation! But what chasm lies between our terrene economy and this more glorious one, I do not know: it may be millions of years for aught I know, or it may simply follow in the natural order of the periods we have passed over. I repeat, I refer my reader to my explanation of this chapter in my last volume.

Here, in the course of time, is a new heaven and a new earth, because the old economy has passed away.

"And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." The new Jerusalem means here the Gentile Christian Church, in distinction from the Jewish Church of the tenth verse. The verse is rooted in the Pentecost: just as God the Holy Spirit descended, so the body of the redeemed will descend to take possession of this new home. And she is prepared to meet her Lord, because, as we have seen in the last chapter, she had been betrothed to Him in covenant, and had put on the righteousness of His nature, or of His own Spirit: her name had been enrolled with His in the volume of life. This descent of the bride from God out of heaven leads me to think there will be a chasm of ages between the great judgment day and this repossession of this new earth, for I think it is our old earth still.

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold,

the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." This verse is rooted in the induction of the ark into the temple. (2 Chron. v.) That ark, with the law laid up in it, was a type of Christ, the great justifying Head of the Church, in whom the law was laid up, and by whom it was fulfilled. That ark in many places of Scripture is called "the tabernacle,"—perhaps from the tabernacle into which it was first inducted; or from the Holy of Holies, in which the Divine presence rested. In the last chapter we have seen "the book of life," or "the new covenant" of grace, and those whose names were found written there no longer amenable to the law, but exempted from justice and from punishment. Now in this twenty-first chapter we not only see them descend from God out of heaven to take possession of this new state of existence, but we see also the Ratifier of that covenant, and consequently the great justifying Head of the saved, with them on this earth.

The great voice out of heaven proclaims this: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men;" the proclamation is from the voice in the temple when the ark was brought in (2 Chron. v. 13), all the trumpeters and singers sang an anthem of praise and thanksgiving to God. God said by Ezekiel, of Christ's first advent, "My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Ezek. xxxvii. 27): this related to this second advent also,—to the time of the dedication of this new earth; that which Christ was so careful to foreshow by His presence at "the feast of the dedication." (John x. 22.) And then we see that Christ was God: "*My* tabernacle,"—the body, or the tabernacle, was the dwelling-place

of the God; and the God was Himself the Ratifier of the covenant He had made; and so, both in Ezekiel and here in the Revelation, "My tabernacle" resolves itself into the presence of the Deity: "God will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

When the ark was brought into the camp of the Philistines, they said, "God is come into the camp." Such is the harmony of Scripture; and we do worship God, that He has thus revealed Himself our righteousness and our glory.

This economy is new, glorious, and perfect; we have seen the purpose of God culminating till it has arrived at this. No more death, sorrow or crying; no more pain, mental or physical; all the old economies have passed away in their season, and there has come out of them perfection and permanency.

5 *And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these sayings are true and faithful.*

6 *And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.*

This voice is the voice of God the Holy Ghost, the Restorer of all things; and I do believe in some future economy He will be revealed, even as God the Creator, and God the Redeemer has been revealed, Three Persons, but one God: and hence this notification. It was He who sat upon the throne,—God, who said it; but through, and by Christ: for it was God in Christ who sat upon the great white throne of judgment. Christ was, and is the power of God, and through Him He can do all things. There is now no limit to His grace, and

Revelation reveals to us that it will work till all things are brought within its pale. We have seen cycles of grace, and why should we suppose they will ever come to an end till God is revealed perfect in love, by that love having embraced all, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." (Eph. i. 10.) "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.) Here we rest: cycles and ages roll on, but glory increases as they roll, and will do so till Christ delivers up the kingdom to the Father,—one universal and eternal reign of perfectness, peace, and glory; and hence the asseveration, "Write: for these words are true and faithful."

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega." That is, that God having said it should be done, the thing was as good as done; for He is the beginning and the ending, the author and the finisher of all things. "In the beginning was the Word," by that Word all things were created; by that Word all things are redeemed, by that Word all things are sustained, and by that Word all things will be restored, all things completed: nothing can fail. "It is done:" the words are rooted in the words of the Creator, when creation was completed; and in the words of the Redeemer: "It is finished." And so of the work of perfect restoration,—of all things being made new as this new earth,—it will be said, "It is done," because it has been already said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."

The next voice is to all economies from the beginning of the

operations to the end. *"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water freely.*

7 *He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

8 *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death.*

That is, to him who loves God, and seeks for Him with all his heart, and soul, and strength, God, through Christ, will give to him of the fountain of His own life freely. And he that overcometh the evil nature that he feels within him, by the Divine nature so brought home to Him through Christ, shall inherit all the things revealed in the glorious future seen in this book ; and shall henceforth be the child of God,—at home with Him in these mansions of light. But the fearful and unbelieving, and all those who will not overcome their evil propensities, passions, and vile dispositions, shall be cast into the lake that burneth with brimstone and fire. Thus good and evil, life and death, are set before the human race, and they are free to choose,—life by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently His Holy Spirit to overcome ; or, rejection by Him, and consequent perdition in our sins. My dear reader, be not thou fearful or unbelieving.

9 *And there came unto me one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.*

10 *And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,*

11 *Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;*

12 *And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:*

13 *On the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates.*

As the sixth vial was poured upon the mystical Euphrates for the Jewish Church to return to her ancient inheritance, so we may suppose this angel who shows John this vision is that sixth angel. This bride, the Lamb's wife, is the Jewish Church.

"And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." A mountain was the known emblem of a kingdom, and the kingdom of Israel is here signified. The vision is rooted in Ezekiel xl.: "In the visions of God brought He me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south."

The bride is that great city, called here "the holy Jerusalem," in distinction from the Gentile Christian Church, which throughout this book is called "The new Jerusalem." (Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2.) "Descending out of heaven from God," is language rooted in the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, so that the vision may refer alike to the resurrection of the Jewish national body as revealed in Ezekiel xxxvii., and to that church descending into this new earth, as the Christian Gentile Church is seen to do.

"Having the glory of God,"—that is of "the Lamb," her

husband: her justifying Head. The reference is still to "The tabernacle of God with men." In Rev. xii. 1 she is seen in the same glory: "A woman clothed with the sun,"—with the Sun of righteousness, her justifying Head. But the fact revealed, "having the glory of God," reveals to us also that Christ was God.

"And her light was like unto a stone, most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." That is, her nature was divine, pure, and holy, transparent and transcendent. The addition is a repetition: "The moral purity or glory of the God."

The city is only another name for the bride, as the "great city Babylon," was only another name for the apostate woman. And hence the next verse.

"And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates." Ancient Jerusalem, like all ancient cities, had her walls and gates,—east, west, north, and south; her sentinels, and names written, to constitute her a body corporate. And so this description of the holy and eternal city is only to reveal to us that she will be constituted again in a future world, and enjoy again all her ancient privileges, but enhanced a thousand-fold in relation to God, and in the possession of His glory. Oh, why will not that people return to Him now? He is ready to run and fall upon their neck, and to receive them. One would think this vision is enough to inspire them with the determination: "I will arise, and go unto *my Father*."

14 *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

15 *And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.*

16 *And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.*

17 *And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.*

This is a vision of the Apostolic Church. But mark: the twelve apostles are not the foundations of the city. The city was there before them, the foundations also; their names are written upon the ancient foundations, of each of which Christ Himself was the foundation-stone. "Upon *this rock*,"—His own spiritual nature,—*"will I build my Church."*

"Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." Poor short-sighted mortals those who cannot see further back than the Apostles,—the Apostolic foundation.

"And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof." These gates and walls do represent the Jewish and Apostolic Churches. The city is now to be measured; and they are to be measured. The golden reed is the sceptre of divine decree, and the measuring is of time, as in Rev. xi. 1. Both these passages are rooted in Ezekiel xl. 5, 6, and Zech. ii. 1, 2, because the holy city is the same.

"And the city lieth foursquare,"—that is, the four quarters of

the earth are now included in it. The "four angels standing on the four corners of the earth," in Rev. vii. 1, represent the same. "And the length is as large as the breadth." This refers to the rotundity of the earth. "And He measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs." This does not refer to the length or breadth of the earth, but, as I have said, to time. And I must confess, as relating to my present theory of interpretation, I do not know what it means. Without doubt there is meaning in the mind of the Spirit relatively to both interpretations, as in Rev. x. 4—7, but at present I do not know what these twelve thousand furlongs mean relatively to seven periods of 666 years. But it must be observed it is the city of terrene existence that is measured, and not the gates, the Jewish Church only,—nor the wall, the Christian Church only. The original of this word furlong is stadium, and signifies a course for running or racing; to which St. Paul refers, 1 Cor. ix. 24: "I have finished my course." (2 Tim. iv. 7.) And therefore I must leave my reader to measure for himself the course of the Church militant before she shall attain to this, the mark of the prize of her high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

"The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." This is a reference to the decreed courses of 666 years of the angels of the Churches. None can complain of partiality, or of unequal advantages or disadvantages; the day of grace and of probation is fixed: "Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." Oh, that the angel of this sixth period would profit by a decree so gracious and so long suffering, and during the 132 years that remain to her seize the prize of the mark of her high calling in Christ, that

her destiny glide not into my other interpretation of this prophecy.

"And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, the measure of a man, that is, of the angel." This verse simply reveals the incorporation, or spiritual oneness, of the Jewish and apostolic Churches. The twelve tribes of Israel multiplied by the twelve apostles would be this number, —an hundred and forty and four. Note, it is the wall that is here measured; but the apostolic Church was radically Jewish, and the Gentile branches were grafted into the good olive tree. (Rom. xi.) The mind of the Spirit here is to show that there will be no new constitution. Christianity is her utmost limit.

Among the ancients, the measure from the elbow to the end of the middle finger was called the common cubit, or cubit of a man, and hence these hundred and forty and four cubits. The reference is to the measurement of the stones for the building of the temple, in connection with the description of the "precious stones" that immediately follow in the next verses in the Revelation. "The foundation was of costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits." (1 Kings vii. 10, 11.) These stones were for the house that Solomon built for his wife, *Pharaoh's daughter*, who was eminently a type of the Gentile Church. This will enable us to understand the remainder of this verse: "The measure of a man, that is, of the angel." This angel is Christ, as seen in the seven candlesticks (Rev. i. 13), and whose voice we heard to all the seven churches, and whose Divine presence we have seen in the Church throughout the world's history.

"Lo, I am with you alway, unto the end of the world."
 "When Christ, *who is our life*, shall appear, then shall ye also

appear with Him in glory." (Col. iii. 4.) "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. ii. 20.) I might quote many such passages, but suffice it to say, it is this spiritual life that is now measured, but in Jewish and apostolic stones; they are one in Christ. "To whom coming, as unto a *living stone* . . . ye also are built up as lively stones, a spiritual house." Christ's succession extends from eternity to eternity: it is He who says in this 21st chapter of Revelation, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." After this measurement of the wall, the Church according to the life of Christ in her, follows a description of her stones.

18 *And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.*

19 *And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;*

20 *The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.*

21 *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was of pure gold, as it were transparent glass.*

This language is figurative, borrowed from the gorgeous East; but it is very expressive of genuineness, purity, holiness, of degrees of glory, of moral splendour, of spiritual transparency, —of all the qualities of body, mind, soul, and spirit, that could only have come from God. The foundations of the wall are of precious stones; but they are garnished with like costly gems, partaking equally of the Divine nature and of the Divine glory.

Let us never forget at what a cost each gem was purchased, brought back, and restored to the city of its God: "not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." Oh, precious gems, precious souls! how resplendent will they ever shine in His sight, in His own nature, in all the dazzling graces of His own Spirit! This will constitute Heaven. No jarring elements, no alloy: each soul pure as from its Maker's hands, cloudless as the Author of its glory.

We have heard of ancient cities with walls and gates to defy the enemy, to tell of angry passions, of rage and fury, of madness and of storm, of the boiling blood of man against his brother man; but here is glory, a redundancy of glory,—not inviting to contest, but to God, to peace, to rest, to eternal life, without a wave to disturb the crystal sea. Enter, oh enter, the pearly gates, whoever may read these lines! and picture a scene so holy, transcendent, and sublime; one that the Spirit of God could paint, but whose fruition is not of time.

22 *And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*

23 *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

24 *And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.*

25 *And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.*

26 *And they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it.*

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie : but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The tribes of ancient Israel went up to the temple to worship there, to keep all the national festivals. The 122nd Psalm is beautiful upon this subject. But this eternal city, unlike the ancient Jerusalem, has no temple in it. The new earth is His temple ; each heart is His temple ; each risen body is His temple. The great Head of the Church is in her midst : He is the supreme object of worship, and no one has to move from the spot in which He dwells to go and worship God. This new earth has been dedicated by His Presence entering into it, as the ancient temple was dedicated, and now it is filled with His Presence and His glory.

"And the city had no need of the sun : " no need of the secular arm, of regal rule, of human power. "Neither of the moon, to shine in it : " no more need of a Church to borrow its light from God and to shed it upon others ; to teach and to preach, and by them to enlighten ; to shine as of old, as a candle upon the table, as a city on a hill. It had been said, "Ye are the light of the world ; " but now there is no need of these : "For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." God in His infinite effulgence is present in every mind, in every heart, and any lesser light would be like a candle to the sun. The distinction here between God and the Lamb seems to be that the one refers to the Eternal Spirit, the other to the example of Christ,—to Him as the Head of the Church, in His then Personal Presence.

"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it ; " so that the Gospel scheme of salvation is still

going on somewhere. There is still an economy of saving-grace going on somewhere ; and the community of which it is composed is receiving its light from this new heaven, just as we receive the light of Revelation from heaven and from God. "And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it." There is an earth, a lower sphere, kings and priests to God there, who are still bringing honour and glory into the celestial city. Before such vast purposes of love, such infinite unwearied love, we fall prostrate, and adore, saying, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

"The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there." "When Christ had overcome the sharpness of death, He did open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." And the pearly gates of the eternal city have never, nor can they ever be shut ; multitudes are continually passing through them, and will be, till all the elect of God are gathered in. The gates of all ancient cities were shut at night (Isaiah xlv. 27 ; xlv. 1) from fear of the enemy, invasion, and assault ; but there will be no night in the city of God, no fear of assault, for He will be its eternal light, and everlasting defence. But the ineffable glory and security of this city is not because God is there, but because by Christ all have received Him. The Lamb, the central object of the city, is not the symbol of Christianity, but its Christianity.

"And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it." Here is a new economy, one of reserve, of refuge, and of salvation ; there is process, and increase of glory, but under what material circumstances or arrangements it is impossible for me to say. We know what our economy of

grace, and of spiritual union with heaven is, and we may suppose the same auspices will continue.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: *but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*” This is Heaven's royal charter,—immunity, freedom; a name written in the covenant of blood made with mankind before the foundation of the world. Oh, lost world, steeped in sin, may your name at last be found written there, and then nothing will remain to exclude you from admission to glory,—to this eternal city. Bow to the sceptre of blood, to the life of God it gives, and you shall be saved.

The first five verses of the next chapter are a continuation of the description of this eternal city.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE first five verses of this chapter rightly belong to the last chapter. And the remainder of the book is a voice to the world's economy as existing when it was written.

1 *And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

2 *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

3 *And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants shall serve him.*

4 *And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.*

5 *And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

6 *And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.*

7 *Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

These verses are a part of the description of the eternal city, and they should not have been detached from the last chapter.

This pure river of water of life, is Christ: "They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was Christ." (1 Cor. x. 4.) We have seen this pure river flowing through our world from Eden to the end of time, and now it is still rolling on through spheres and economies, we know not where. As we have seen nether worlds walking in the light of the new heaven, so now there are living waters flowing from it; and we may suppose they will ever flow, so long as there is one thirsty soul left to drink. The river is said to proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, because the sacred Scriptures, which reveal to us Christ, were laid up beneath the mercy seat, above which the Divine Presence was enthroned. The knowledge of Christ, or the truth of Him, by which alone we receive His Holy Spirit, is this river of life. We encamp by it in our journey through life: it is refreshing, healthful, saving, regenerating, sanctifying, glorifying; and here, as we see, overreaching; and overreaching, stretching away its living branches, till it shall extend to the utmost bound, to its destined limit, where there is no more need. My reader should turn to a few passages to understand the true meaning of this abounding river. (Ps. xlv. 7; Ezek. xlvii. 7; Zech. xiv. 8; Hab. ii. 14; Isa. xi. 9; xxxv. 6, 7; xlv. 4; John vii. 38, 39.) "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son:" this is the source of that river, and the ocean into which it rolls.

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of

the tree were for the healing of the nations." This tree of life is Christ. In the midst of the street of the city, is a reference to Rev. xxi. 21 : "The street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." The fact recorded seems to say Christ is everywhere ; in the churches in the city, as well as in the churches in the country, by the river side. The Jews had synagogues, or places of worship on both sides the Jordan, and this revelation of the eternal city is simply rooted in that fact ; although the tree of life in the midst of Eden (Gen. ii. 9), is the root of the revelation of the future. What rolling economies are in its womb, we do not know ; ours, which began in Eden, seems but a type of rolling futurities.

"Twelve manner of fruits," refer to the different gifts of the Spirit in the twelve representatives of the body, the Church : the same which had before been revealed in the twelve stones, or foundations of the wall of the city. 1 Cor. xii. explains this expression ; for as the gifts of the Spirit are infinite, so are His fruits. "And yielded her fruit every month," is a reference to the Christian Passover celebrated by the Christian Church. The ancient feast was an annual one ; but I have shown how months mean years under the trumpets, from the feast of trumpets being annual. In the early Christian Church the Lord's Supper may have been celebrated every month, or the words may have been prophetic.

"And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The leaves of many trees are medicinal, and this is the meaning here : "The fruit thereof shall be for meat ; and the leaves thereof for medicine." (Ezek. xlvii. 12.) Balm was made from plants, and hence the inquiry of the prophet : "Is there no balm in Gilead ? no physician there ? why then is not

the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (Jer. viii. 22; xli. 11.) And hence another name of Christ: "A plant of renown." (Ezek. xxxiv. 29.) Still, the healing is from the tree itself,—it may be through the medium of the Church, if she be faithful, or by the means of the eternal Word: "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." The Church may be in the great and terrible wilderness of this world,—in Babylon the Great,—but one with "The tree of life;" she also must be a tree of righteousness, yielding life unto life eternal. "He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot." (Is. xl. 20.)

"And there shall be no more curse:" no more penalty of sin, because the names of all those now in the eternal city are in the book of life, and the fulfiller of that covenant has answered all demands,—the recipients of His grace are free. (Gal. iii. 13; John iii. 18.) "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (Rev. viii. 32, 33, 36.) "But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it:" that is, the standard of the eternal throne is not only established, but arrived at by all, upheld in its purity. The work of the Holy Ghost, sanctification, the result of the justified state, is accomplished. Justification by Christ does not lower the standard of God's throne. The curse is now doubly impossible.

"And they shall see His face:" because, being holy, there is nothing to hide God from view: effulgence answers to effulgence; glory meets serenely the eye of glory. "And His name shall be in their foreheads:" that is, the seal of His own Spirit, the impression or image of His own nature; it will be in the life for ever. The Creator said, "Let us make man in our image:" now that image is eternally restored.

Again it is repeated, "There shall be no night there : " no more trouble, or confusion. "And they need no candle : " no lesser light than the light of God. "Neither of the sun : " God is King, and no weaker arm is required to preserve order. "For the Lord God giveth them light : and *they shall reign* for ever and ever." This refers to the third verse : "The throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and they shall reign for ever and ever." The restoration and restitution of all things have taken place : no more sin, no more punishment ; no more anarchy, and no more subjecting of rebel spirits. The throne of God and of the Lamb, the moral standard of their being, is the antidote of the curse ; they now reign triumphantly and supremely, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

The angel who had shown John these things, confirmed all he had said : "These sayings are faithful and true ; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His *angel*,"—Christ, referring to Rev. i. 1,—*"to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done."* And then, as the faithful ambassador of Christ, he closed the vision or prophecy in His name : "Behold, I come quickly : blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of this prophecy of this book."

8 *And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.*

9 *Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not : for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : worship God.*

10 *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book : for the time is at hand.*

This disposition of John to creature-worship is but a type

of what exists to the present day. Creature idolatry is world-wide, but nowhere to be found more than in Christians. Found indeed it is in nominal Christianity,—in counterfeit Christians; but I repeat, it is the besetting sin of the age,—of multitudes who think themselves perfect specimens, not only of human nature, of Christians, but of beings to be imitated, of portraits to be drawn and redrawn,—to be exhibited to the whole world, if I may not say to be deified, certainly to be worshipped. And the people are as ready to fall down and worship as these proud gods are to be worshipped. In these verses the two cases are set before us: even John, not only the beloved disciple, but the highly favoured prophet of the Lord, was deceived: he would have worshipped the servant instead of Christ,—as many worship the Church instead of the great Head of the Church. The rebuke of the servant,—his humble, rightminded, straightforward manner of setting the matter in the right light,—is worthy of the attention of creature-worshippers, and of creatures worshipped. See thou do it not! I am a servant as you are, a prophet as you are; and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. In the foregoing verse it is written, “Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” From the angel speaking in the name of his Master, John mistook him for the Master; but he said, No: “I am of them which keep the sayings of this book.” I will not be worshipped: “worship God.” The reference is to the worship of the image of the beast (Rev. xiii. 4; viii. 15), which image was the Romish Church in her human gear, self-deification, self-idolatry, self-glorification,—in her likeness of the regal power, of “The prince of this world.” This angel said, Those who

keep the sayings of this book do not worship any thing belonging to that corrupt system : they " worship God."

"And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book : for the time is at hand." When a prophecy was not to be immediately fulfilled, it was sealed. (Rev. x. 4 ; Dan. xii. 9.) But when it was to be soon fulfilled, it was not sealed. And so here : when this was written there were events at the very door soon to be fulfilled ; and the revelation of seven periods of 666 years was not to be sealed ; but there were things in the mind of the Spirit of more extensive signification, and they were not to be written. (Rev. x. 4.)

11 *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still : and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still : and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still : and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

This verse is a particular reference to the end of the day of probation, to the day of judgment to the probationers : the order of proceeding is a trumpet in our ears. Who is not *unjust* ? I do not know one who is not,—parent, master, the minister of Christ. The constitution we live under is crushing, grinding, unjust ; not one in the Christian community can stand justified before God. "And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still." Who is not filthy before God ? proud, covetous, Pharisaical, corrupt in his judgment of things ? "How can he be clean that is born of a woman ?"

"And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still." That is, he who, feeling his odious injustice and deceitful heart, has in earnest fled to Christ, the Fulfiller of the law, and obtained the gift of His righteousness and His Holy Spirit to conform him to His image. "And he that is *holy*, let him be holy

still." Death comes to each individual as these final vials come to the body of the people; and "in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall lie." The sinner who dies out of Christ is a sinner still; and we should ask ourselves if by faith we have received His righteousness, and by His grace, His Spirit. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

12 *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

This is a reference to the great Judgment Day, as described in Rev. xx. 12. Good works will be the fruit of sound doctrine; but while unbelievers are judged according to their wicked works, believers will stand upon the ground of covenant grace.

13 *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*

It is very remarkable that this voice is still the voice of the sixth Church, whose voice we have alone heard from the 9th verse of Rev. xxi. It is God through Christ, "The mighty God, the everlasting Father," speaking in and by His Church; or, as she calls herself, a servant and a prophet. I say, this is very striking, and it should arm us with courage when as messengers we are sent by Him to speak with His authority, and in His name, from His Word,—for He then, as here, appears to authorize that Word by proclaiming His own name.

"I am Alpha and Omega." And hence this Divine declaration throughout this book. (Rev. i. 8—18; iii. 14; xxi. 6.) Every spiritual agent is of His Body, the Church; and thus we have seen in all ages He calls whom He will, and speaks by whom He will. All the angels of this book were foreknown

and predestinated by Him ; He raises them up when their time is come, and Himself speaks in them.

14 *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

One of the most striking features of the Gospel is that it sets up a high standard of morality : we never find them separated. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," is the inscription ever waving upon its banner,—the very motto of free grace, as the wording of this verse indicates. Is then salvation dependent upon works ? No, not at all : for no one can live up to the requirement and spirit of the Divine law, or do works strictly according to the will of God ; but the growing life of the Spirit within, the daily struggle after perfect conformity to the Word, evidence a state of grace,—the root, Christ,—and as such commend themselves to God, candidates for the completion of the work of grace, even life eternal. The language of the verse is strong,—a seeming contradiction to the doctrine of glory being alone by the presence of "The tabernacle of God" with men ; but it is not so : the power to do His commandments is the evidence of the life of God begun below ; and then the practice and the life give right to "the tree of life,"—to this eternal city. The recipient of Divine grace cannot at any time do violence to God's moral government without being amenable to Him, to the laws of His most holy Word, and to the most glorious of all His attributes,—justice. In the teaching of St. Peter we find also this doctrine of ethics and of free grace thus singularly inwrought, yet perfectly distinct : "Repent ye, and be converted, *that your sins may be blotted out.*" Yes, I repeat the truth, that the moral

splendour of the Gospel is the evidence of its divinity. As some one has rightly said, "The Gospel is the most practical thing in the world." Grace is radical, thorough, and complete; what it begins it finishes, and hence the culminating point of the history: "And may enter in through the gates into the city." These gates signify the true hidden Church of Christ on earth; not a body of priests and prelates, but a community of spiritual men and women: their pearly mass represents the spiritual *vestibule* to glory. This word from *vestis*, a garment, means literally a cloak, or robing room; so that we are here, in the Church on earth, to put on the righteousness of Christ. He Himself explained this in the parable of the marriage of the king's son. "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless." (Matt. xxii. 12.) I leave this subject, referring the reader to a tract of the writer's on the doctrine of an imputed righteousness.

15 *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

We have read before, "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." The absolute separation of the wicked from the righteous on the day of judgment (Rev. xx. 15), has left the eternal city in its high, full-orbed splendour, never to have its glory marred by aught from without its sacred precinct. Reader, contemplate the eternal bourne; the complete felicity of heaven; the remorse, despair, and torment of the lost.

16 *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

This is again the voice of the spiritual agent, as in the 13th verse: "I Jesus," indicates here the Saviour of the world, the Leader and Captain of our salvation. "I have given him a leader and commander to the people." (Isa. lv. 4.) The name is from Joshua, who led his people into Canaan. "If Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." (Heb. iv. 8, 9.) He has now brought His people into the heavenly Canaan,—into their eternal rest. The name here also indicates the Mediator of the covenant: He, "the Tabernacle of God," who in these chapters we have seen overshadowing the earth with His glory,—He is "the Tree of Life," who has borne these fruits to His own glory. First, He proclaims that name as Saviour, or Leader: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches:" that is, I have given you this prophecy by my messenger, the Church, to guide you to this eternal city. And a most blessed chart it is; for where should we be in storm and shipwreck if we had not a Pilot and a Saviour to go to? if, amidst accusations, denunciations, and the blasphemies of the enemy, we had not a Deliverer and a sure Refuge to flee to? And hence the second section of the verse: "I am the root and the offspring of David." That is, the Divine person of the covenant, the fulfiller of the law for you. It is rooted in Ps. cx. 1, 4; Matt. xxii. 44; Acts ii. 34. But in this name we not only see the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, but also the spiritual Being in the Church. "I Jesus have sent mine angel:" God in the angel of the sixth Church. I do not know how that messenger was foreseen, nor how all these angels were foreshown; but they were represented bodily to

John. "Behold, I send a messenger before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him, and obey His voice. . . . For my name is in Him." (Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.) This was Christ, the angel of the covenant. "The angel of His presence saved them. . . . And He carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit." (Isa. lxiii. 9, 10.) And so it matters not to us to know how or by whom these angels of the future were represented, or whether God did make them really to appear, which was quite possible with Him; but it is enough for us to know that God the eternal Spirit was in them: that the Saviour sent His messenger. And this explains to us this duplex Being,—angel. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, dwelt in Him, as we have heard Him speak in each of these names; but the Trinity is lost in the unity of the Holy Spirit. It is God who has sent to us to show us these things. "The Spirit of prophecy" is God. (1 Peter. i. 11; 2 Epia. i. 21.) "Worship God: for the testimony"—or witness—"of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. xix. 10.) Fulfilled prophecy has demonstrated the fact, that God, the leader of His people, was in the prophets, ever leading His Church by a right way to this city of habitation.

Christ in the Church is one of the fundamental doctrines of Revelation; and we have seen she rises to power and glory, or sinks to shame and confusion, just in proportion as she supplicates and proclaims Him, or rejects Him. "Because I live, ye shall live also." God was in covenant with the world through Christ in a past eternity,—and therefore in Abel, the root of David,—and in the Christian Church, the offspring of David,—the Author of life and eternal issue. "Thy years

are throughout all generations." (Pa. cii. 24—28.) This verse in the Revelation edited, "I, Jesus," is a grand revelation of the Saviour, as seen throughout Scripture (2 Sam. xxii. 3; Isa. xliii. 3—11; Luke ii. 11; Acts v. 31): a spiritual Being existing throughout all ages. And hence this third designation of Himself in it: "The bright and morning Star." That is, the Supreme Ruler of each new dynasty. New eras may set in the darkest nights, crowns may decay, and thrones crumble; but "the bright and morning star," Christ, will gild again each new era. The darker the night the more bright and the more welcome will be the morning Star. The world may grow old and awake in new resurrection life, but God in Christ ever has been, and ever will be, the Upholder of the universal frame, the Harbinger of brighter and still brighter days: "the bright and morning Star" of an unending day.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

That is, the Spirit and the Church say, Come to Jesus; to the Being who had presented Himself in His true characteristics, in the last verse. Come to the Lord of life and glory, to the King Supreme, to the root and offspring of David; to the Star who is always light, and who turns the shadow of death into the morning. Come to "the tree of life," to the pure river of the water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It is the office of the eternal Spirit to say, Come. We have heard the same voice from Him before: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." (Rev.

xxi. 6.) And it is the great commission of the Church to say, Come to Jesus, the Fountain of life. And it is the commission of every layman who "heareth," and who has received life for himself, to say, Come. It is a glorious commission for all. And then the Lord of life affixes His own invitation: "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The attitude in which Jesus here presents Himself is rooted in the attitudes He assumes in His addresses to the seven Churches. There they are sometimes stern, and almost menacing; but here, winning, gracious, and all-subduing. The Divine invitation to Come is as broad, and free, and open as sovereign grace can make it. Who can resist His will? It is rooted in the same blessed invitation of the Saviour of the world when He was upon earth. (Matt. xi. 28; xxv. 34; John v. 40; vii. 37.) "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God." (Ps. lxxv. 9.)

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." (Ps. xlv. 4.) We have seen this river of life roll from Eden, making glad the city of God on earth, proceeding from the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High on earth. It has followed us into the eternal city; and is still seen flowing "freely" from the throne of God and the Lamb there. May it inspire in us the Divine spirit of the angel who showed John these things,—the worship of God.

18 *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:*

19 *And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the*

book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20 *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

21 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

This Divine curse pronounced upon these two offending parties is sufficiently awful to make one fear to approach this sacred oracle at all.

It seems to me to direct the writer to the two interpretations: the one may not be sent forth to the world without the other, without incurring peril, the wrath of a just, yet merciful, God. The first interpretation alone would proclaim justice without mercy, this last alone would proclaim mercy without justice. The one reveals sin exceeding sinful, and God holy; the other, the doctrine of Forgiveness, and God both holy and merciful. In these approaching conflicts may my people obtain the mercy and the pardon and the love of a loving Father through Christ.

With the blood of Christ upon my offering, upon this interpretation also, I present it to the public, praying that it may find acceptance of Him, and that I may obtain His forgiveness for all my many infirmities and unfaithfulness.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

"SURELY I COME QUICKLY. AMEN. EVEN SO,
COME, LORD JESUS."

FAITHFUL is He who promised,
The Word of God is sure,
He will return to reign,
Who came to die before.
But, from whence will He return,
Where is the great white throne ?
Where the God-man is now enthroned,
Where Jesus reigns alone ? *

Eye hath not seen that glory,
Ear hath not heard the sound,
Of angels' and archangels' Praise,
That the high throne surrounds.
Holy, holy, Holy One,
Is the poor strain of earth,†
But where's that world of glory,
That gave this note its birth ?

High heaven, third heaven, where art thou,
Where God in glory reigns ?
Where is that realm transcendent,
That gave to earth these strains ?

* Luke xxii. 69.

† Isaiah vi. 3.

Where is that transcendental sphere,
From which the God-man came ?
From whence He is coming quickly,
The heaven-born orb to claim ?

Centre of depths and systems,
That world of light may roll,
Centre of gravitation,
Holding creation's soul.
Oh, centre life, Almighty God,
Draw all men unto Thee,
That Thy return may witness pure,
Loyal return to Thee.

Oh come, Lord Jesus, quickly come,
No longer now delay,
Forgive rebellion, treason, sin,
Thy sovereign grace display.
Though cold, and foul, and dead our hearts,
By nature alien still,
Come, and they cannot then resist,
Thy work of love fulfil.

Oh come, Lord Jesus, quickly come,
As lightning from the east,
With clouds of angels in Thy train,
Give to Thy people rest.
To the whole groaning, travailing earth,
Give now the rest of heaven ;
And by Thy second coming, Lord,
Explain the mystic seven.

Oh come, Lord Jesus, quickly come,
Worth, works, are not our plea,
But while we yet were sinners,
Thou diedst for me, for me.
And while we yet are sinners,
Oh come, Lord Jesus, come,
Scorning the thought of merit,
Our only hope is come.

Oh come, receive the wandering orb,
Thine own life's blood has bought,
Have mercy on thine enemies
For what that blood has wrought.
Have mercy on thine enemies,
Oh Lord, receive this cry,
By grace, and power, and love Divine,
Bring every rebel nigh.

NOTE.

ONCE more I repeat, and I wish it to be clearly understood, that I leave the title of this book,

SALVATION ;

OR, MORE NOTES ON PROPHECY.

Believing that the two interpretations I have given of this book of the Revelation, of the mystical seven of prophecy, are both alike right ; and that they are the explanation, or the mind, of the Spirit in Rev. *xxii.* 18, 19. But while I leave this title, I dare not revoke that of Divine Decree, and Free Will.

“Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.”

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